

ANTILLEN REVIEW

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**Antilles drawn into
cold war orbit**

**Aruba's tourism
healthier than ever**

Battle against crime

Economic survey

Ten years law school

**A revealing report
by ecumenical
movement**

Fifty years golf



Photo F. Sulvaran

**Martina cabinet
saved by master-stroke**

The inside story

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LITER



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FROM THE EDITOR



Reviewing the first volume of A.R. one is struck by the profound changes which took place during that first year of the magazine's existence.

A.R. was born in those happy and hopeful days when Queen Beatrix visited the islands. A new sense of trust and a spirit of strength and hope, we wrote, was spreading through the country. The Martina Cabinet, after having acquainted itself with the nation's problems during its first year in office, was clearly set on a course toward more decisive government. The then upcoming Round Table Conference held yet the promise, as Aruba's Henk Timmer wrote, of a successful start of a completely new era in the history of these islands. There was a thrill in the air. But today the mood has changed. Concern bordering on anxiety is written over the face of the land.

No longer does the Government impress people as being gifted with strong leadership. Hampered by a civil service generally in disarray, the decision making process has been stalled considerably. The apparent clumsy handling of the Queen of Saba af-

fair did little to enhance the Cabinet's image. The recent breach with Aruba has added to the growing feeling of disappointment, a sense of uncertainty about the future. And on top of that few are by now unaware of the rising tide of marxist oriented activism. The resulting mood is one of apprehensiveness.

The dangers inherent to such a situation are well known. Fertile soil is being offered to both the extreme left and right. The present upsurge of marxist and nihilistic movements is already encountering a negative protest, which hints of fascism. Time has come for the democratic forces in the country to be on their guard. Negative developments as indicated can only be successfully counteracted by positive action, never by the mere rejection of other points of view.

A.R. intends in its second volume to continue contributing to the process of building up rather than breaking down. We hope you will stay with us also in this sense.

CONTENTS

| | | | | | |
|--|----|------------------------------------|----|---------------------------|----|
| NATIONAL | 5 | ECONOMY | 23 | PRESS | 35 |
| Martina cabinet saved by master-stroke | | Protectional measures | | Discussing the profession | |
| BONAIRE | 9 | SPECIAL FEATURE | 24 | RELIGION | 37 |
| Hotel training school | | Antilles drawn into cold war orbit | | A revealing report | |
| ARUBA | 11 | LAW | 27 | INTROSPECTION | 43 |
| Tourist industry healthier than ever | | Ten years law school | | Why worry? | |
| CURACAO | 15 | REGION | 29 | WINE | 44 |
| Battle against crime | | Tourism progress report | | Knowing your label | |
| WINDWARD ISLANDS | 17 | PEOPLE | 31 | SPORT | 45 |
| Saba's printing business | | MEDICINE | 33 | 50 years golf | |
| FINANCE | 19 | A sound prescription | | BIBLIOGRAPHY | 46 |
| Economic survey | | | | | |



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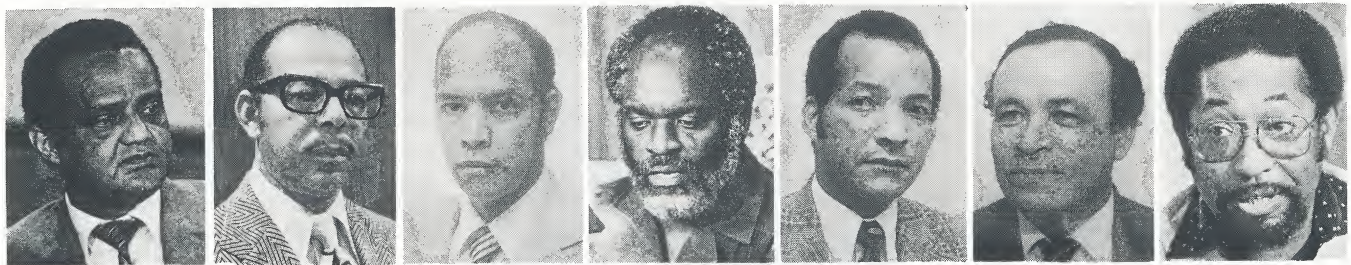
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Martina cabinet saved by master-stroke

But for how long?

The country gasped. At 3 p.m. on the first of September the unexpected news was broadcasted all over the Antilles. The two year old government headed by Mr. Don Martina had fallen. Coalition partner MEP of independence prone Aruba had walked out. During all of September the 2nd the corridors of power — and for that matter all other corridors — buzzed with speculations about a possible patching up of the coalition or new elections. A third possibility was overlooked by all but a few shrewd minds in the Windward Islands. On the morning of the 3rd of September the country gasped again. The Martina Cabinet still stood thanks to an initiative of and support by the party it chastized uninterruptedly for two years: the Democratic Party of St. Maarten. A shocked Aruba, second largest island in the Antilles, found itself in off-side position. Even more so because the new coalition's no.1 priority read: to obtain a definite decision about Aruba's future constitutional status and that within six months. The hour of truth had arrived. And once again the country buzzed with speculations. Will the Antilles fall apart soon? How long will the present coalition hold? Will Holland play ball or try to force a compromise? No doubt, there will be more gasping in the months to come.



Photo: F. Sullivan

Betico Croes: "Miscalculation"

Too much

The immediate cause for the crisis was about oil as yet to be found. Indications are that the continental plateau to the east of Aruba may contain the precious mineral. A protocol regulating the partitioning of shares and profits between the island and the nation had been drawn up after much haggling. In comparison to the agreement between the Windward Islands and the Central Government with regards to the Saba Bank, where prospects also look promising, Aruba got an excellent deal. The Central Government conceded 90% of the shares and 75% of the revenues. The Saba agreement mentions 35% for the Windwards and 65% to be put in a trust for the

development of all the six islands, the Central Government holding a minority of the shares be it preferential. The passage in the Saba contract stating that all production sharing agreements must be approved by the Prime-Minister, was also changed in the Aruba protocol. Instead parties agreed on the formula of a consensus needed both in the Board of supervisory directors and the Board of managing directors. This would give the Central Government at least the right of veto. It should be noted at this point that all these concessions by Curaçao's leading party (MAN) and coalition partner in the Central Government did not exactly enhance its standing with the Curaçao electorate nor that of its leader (and Prime-Minister) Don Martina. The signing of the agreed upon protocol, which should have taken place in February of this year, was postponed because two of the signatories were off the islands. In the meantime the Aruban opposition went after the MEP accusing it of selling out Aruba's rights. Betico Croes, MEP's charismatic leader, conscious of the fact that he was slowly but surely losing support, decided to go back on his (party's) given word. And when on September the 1st the Council of Ministers met to decide on the protocol, Aruba suddenly objected to the consensus paragraph. Mr. ▶

Don Martina realised that he could not make any more concessions without losing all credibility. The MEP walked out and the Government fell.

Detail.

An interesting detail is provided by the case of the coalition member from Bonaire. At the time of settling the sea frontiers with Venezuela Bonaire agreed to conceding a part of the continental plateau near the Flamingo Island to the southern neighbour in exchange for a larger share near Aruba, where chances for an oil find look better. This was done in good faith expecting that a fair percentage of the profits would be used for the benefit of all the islands including Bonaire. Aruba's demand for complete control on September the first was obviously unacceptable also for this partner in the Central Government.

Miscalculation

When the MEP walked out they did so with full confidence of being back for a new round of negotiations within days. Obviously none of the Aruban opposition parties could afford to take their place in the Government. Mr. Croes at a press-conference later that 1st of September already indicated his willingness to re-open the talks. He was obviously using the crisis as a means of putting pressure on Curaçao. Neither he nor mr. Martina's party, the MAN, wanted elections. The obvious solution seemed the appointment of a peacemaker by the country's Governor. That might give Aruba a chance to extort more concessions. At first sight they appeared to be right.

Prime-Minister Martina publicly declared that elections were not opportune. He too opted for a peacemaker.

For good reasons nobody at that moment thought of the possibility of the Democratic Party of the Windwards joining the coalition and thereby providing a parliamentary majority. After all mr. Martina's party had labelled that party and its leader Claude Wathey

if not by words than by implication: 'unacceptable'.

Master stroke.

Whether justified or not St. Maarten had been the Martina Cabinet's favourite battle ground in tackling corruption. Mr. Hendrik Croes (MEP) Minister of Justice had a two year long field day making life difficult for mr. Wathey and his associates. And it should be observed with full approval of Curaçao's MAN!

Already on the evening of that 1st of September mr. Wathey and his advisers saw their chance. Hours



Claude Wathey: shrewd mind

of deliberations followed and a decision was reached on September the 2nd. Supporting the diminished Cabinet would give them an opportunity of revenge with regard to Aruba, a unique position of power in the Central Government and consequently release from the afore mentioned witch hunt. Most important of all it might solve the Aruba problem once and for all.

They moved fast. That same day one of mr. Wathey's advisers called from St. Maarten to pass on the offer to mr. Jules Eisden, Minister of Social Affairs. Mr. Eisden, a keen politician, who had taken care to establish excellent relations in the Windwards asked to speak directly with mr. Wathey. After having heard mr. Wathey out he promised to call back after consulting the Prime-Minister. Within ten minutes he was back on the line announcing full agreement!

That same night mr. Wathey arrived at Curaçao. Upon landing at 2 a.m. he waved away the waiting limousine from the Government's car pool. Meeting some of his advisers outside the airport he learned of a negative decision by MAN's party board, which had heard rumors of the possible deal. Discussions with mr. Eisden and next mr. Martina during the morning hours, however, sealed the pact. When the deal was applauded by the whole country, except Aruba, MAN's party bosses kept their peace. Thus mr. Wathey and his advisers dealt out their master stroke, though mr. Martina got most of the credit.

Deal

Mr. Wathey's argument was simple. During the telephone conversation on September the 2nd he pointed out to mr. Eisden that elections would solve nothing. Certainly not the Aruba problem. Whatever the outcome the Arubans would continue using their partnership in a coalition to further their own aspirations. Moreover several important issues could not be put off. He reminded mr. Eisden of the upcoming talks with the USA concerning the tax-treaty (see AR vol 1, no 5). Also the re-opening of St. Maarten's largest hotel (and largest employer) should be dealt with before the beginning of the tourist season in November. He offered to support the Cabinet in parliament without demanding a seat on the same. The only stringent condition mr. Wathey put forward concerned clarity about Aruba's future within six months. A declaration signed by the parliamentary representatives of the coalition partners on the 3rd of September mentions all mr. Wathey's points.

Time bomb

The rennovated Cabinet, however, faces a very uncertain future. First of all the afore mentioned agreement does not state the names of the Cabinet ministers. A first draft, which did contain them, was rejected by St. Maarten's member of parliament, mr. Leo Chance. He refused to see his signature linked to the name of the

Minister of Finance, mr. Marco de Castro. Couple this to the fact that the other Curaçao coalition partner(DP) had already informed the MAN of its intention not to vote against a motion of no-confidence aimed at mr. de Castro for his role in the OFIR-case (see AR vol 1, no 4) and it is obvious that trouble lies ahead.

Even more so because MAN has declared at several occasions to back up mr. de Castro to the (bitter) end. To survive mr. Martina will have to do some quick thinking. Maintaining his Minister of Finance implies the fall of the Cabinet in 4 to 5 months, observers hold. Patching up his former relationship with Aruba's MEP will not be acceptable to any of the coalition partners and most certainly not to the Curaçao electorate. The only solution may be to re-shuffle his team and exchange mr. de Castro with the present Minister Plenipotentiary in The Hague. Such a move might allow for a measure of face saving and keep the Cabinet intact.

More problems

The proposal to arrange a conference between the Central Government, Aruba and the Netherlands to decide about Aruba's future course, is not without its negative aspects. The other islands, as islands, will not be represented. A development, mr Martina probably welcomes. A late convert to the idea of a united Antilles after independence, he increasingly believes in the value of a Central Government. Even if Aruba would go it alone, he would prefer to continue with the remaining five islands as one nation. But such a construction would increase Curaçao's dominant position manifold. It stands to reason that the smaller islands will not easily accept such a solution.

Replacing the MEP's ministerial posts (Economics, Justice and Transport) also poses a problem. The uncertain future of the Cabinet makes it almost impossible to find willing candidates. One of the reasons why the Windward D.P. did not aspire to a seat in Martina's



v. d. Stee: Long distance approval

Photo F. Sullivan

the co-operation with the MAN is growing rapidly.

Holland

Whether the 'master stroke' will indeed yield success with regard to Aruba, depends to a large extent on Holland. Informed of the ongoing negotiations during the "Wathey-night", Dutch Minister for Antillean Affairs mr. A. van der Stee, unofficially voiced his approval by means of a long distance call. But what position Holland will take at the proposed conference is still an open question. Hopes are that van der Stee will stand firm and deny Aruba a 'status aparte' (independence with special ties to Holland). If so Aruba will have to make up its mind. Should it decide to opt for full independence, it is hoped by insiders that Holland will impose a time-limit of 1 to 2 years. This might cause a second shock wave in Aruba and possibly a turn about. Indications are that Holland does indeed intend to force Aruba to make its choice.

St. Maarten's master stroke has at least created a situation which allows no further delay of the basic decisions determining the future of the country. ■

Coalition member, the D.P. of Curaçao, may prove to be an increasingly unwilling partner. Recently its standing with the electorate showed signs of great improvement. The succesful saving of the Cabinet, largely ascribed to MAN's Martina, has not done the D.P. much good. Opposition to

St. Maarten's master stroke has at least created a situation which allows no further delay of the basic decisions determining the future of the country. ■



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Hotel training school project submitted for financing

by Frank McManus

In line with Bonaire's drive to expand its tourism sector, word was received early September that the proposal for the financing of construction of the Bonaire Hotel Training School has been submitted to the Dutch Government.

The project calls for the construction of the new school in two phases. Phase one will consist of the building of four principal rooms of kitchen, restaurant, bar and a lounge with smaller rooms for a library, store room, rest rooms and a disposal unit.

In the second phase, classrooms for instruction in food and beverage production and front desk and housekeeping operations will be constructed as well as a demonstration guest room, two actual hoteltype guest rooms and other ancilliary facilities to include administrative offices and a students' outdoor recreation area. The new training school will be adjacent to the existent School of Domestic Sciences.

Coordination of the project is under the direction of the Central Government Department for Development Cooperation in Curaçao. The architects/engineers who have designed the construction aspect of the project are Associated Architects of Aruba, Mr. Karl Schotborgh, architect in charge.

Initial hotel training facilities in Bonaire have been in effect since 1978 when two International Labour Office specialists from the United Nations came to the island to establish and commence training courses at the School of Domestic Sciences. Mr. Henry

Ruselack is the UN expert in charge of hotel and restaurant training and Mr. Fritz Kaiser the expert in food production. Graduates from these first training courses are now employed in a number of Bonaire hotels.

The objectives of the project are to strengthen and widen hotel training in Bonaire and to develop by the end of the project an operational training centre staffed by nationals and capable of producing 30-40 graduates each year for employment in the Bonaire hotel industry.

At present, the population of Bonaire is some 9,000 persons with half under the age of 24 years. The labour force of 2,845 persons accounts for 31% of the population with unemployment running between 400 and 500 persons. The largest employers are the three business enterprises of petroleum, salt and garment manufacturing. The tourism sector accounts for 300 work places or 17% of the work force.

The Bonaire Government has put increasing emphasis on the need to expand the present tourism industry. An extensive study for the promotion of tourism to the island was recently compiled by the British management consulting firm of Pannell Kerr Forster which calls for a US\$1.1 million promotion marketing campaign to be conducted by the Bonaire Tourism Bureau over the next two years (see AR vol. 1 no. 4). A United Nations tourism marketing adviser from the International Labour Office, Mr. Richard Easley, will take up his post in Kralendijk in mid-September and will work directly with the Bonaire Tourism Bureau.



Photo: F. McManus

Ludi de Palm

U.S. fellowship for silversmith

Mr. Ludmilo de Palm, a jeweler metalsmith with Arte Industria Bonairiano, is scheduled to leave on a three month's fellowship to Cranbrook Academy, one of the leading art academies in the United States, on September 11.

Cranbrook Academy is located in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, about 20 miles outside of Detroit, and Mr. de Palm will be attending on a fellowship granted by the Central Government. He will be studying with Mr. Richard Thomas, one of the best known metalsmiths in America who is renowned for his liturgical work.

Mr. de Palm attended the L.T.S. Technical School in Bonaire and continued his studies under the Government and United Nations programme there. He went to Holland for one year for advanced training in silver and goldsmithing and travelled to Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland and France as well.

He is considered the finest black coral and silver jewelerymaker in the Antilles and has been working with Arte Industria Bonairiano for four years. This crafts foundation is one of five similar organizations established by the Central Government and the United Nations under its executing agency, the International Labour Office (ILO). Students are accepted at Cranbrook Academy on merit, on the quality of previous work and potential. ■



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AR asked Jan de Ruyter, chairman of Aruba's Hotel and Tourist Association (AHATA), the secret of Aruba's continuing (tourist) boom. All the more remarkable in view of the general decline of the industry in the surrounding Caribbean (see REGION). He is quite willing to supply the answer.

Co-operation between all parties concerned, long-term planning, aggressive marketing and constant effort to improve the product are the keywords explaining Aruba's success story.

Occupancy

Relaxing over coffee in his modest but efficient office, mr. de Ruyter, produces a sheet showing the average occupancy rates of Aruba's hotels during the first seven months of this year. The figures are impressive.

Especially the increase as compared to 1980.

| | | |
|----------|-------|-----------|
| January | 93.6% | (+ 0.8%) |
| February | 96.3% | (+ 2.8%) |
| March | 85.9% | (+ 11.5%) |
| April | 74.8% | (- 2.7%) |
| June | 73.2% | (+ 18.0%) |
| July | 81.1% | (+ 11.4%) |

The upward trend, according to mr. de Ruyter, continues. His own hotel, the Holiday Inn, shows a 100% occupancy rate for August, which means a 15% increase as compared to last year! Arrival projections for the coming period look very good indeed. The small decline during last April was due

to miscalculations with regard to the booking projections at two time-sharing hotels. It has no structural significance. Most other hotels in fact improved their rates during that month.

Advantage

These figures contrast sharply with the general Caribbean picture. Spiralling airfares, increased hotel operating costs and the world-wide recession are usually mentioned to explain the downward trend of the tourist industry in the region. But these factors apply to Aruba as well. Mr. de Ruyter explains: "There will always be a demand for the product of our trade.

Aruba has a natural advantage. It offers the visitor a very attractive combination of sunny beaches, entertainment and friendliness. Some islands may have beautiful beaches but little friendliness to offer. Or plenty of entertainment but no beaches. Aruba has all three. An excellent formula".

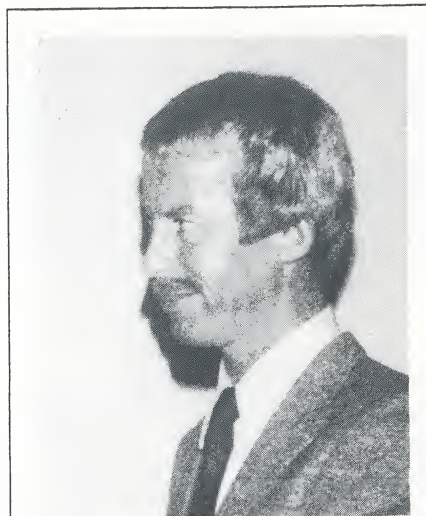


Photo Amigoe Aruba

Jan de Ruyter (37) studied at the Hague's well-known hotel/school and Cornell University. After having worked a short while in Holland he was employed by Inter Continental Hotels, first in Paris and next in Curaçao. He was then asked to start up the Holiday Inn in Caracas.

After two years he went to the Holiday Inn in Aruba. Besides being general-manager of the 400-room hotel, he holds the position of president of the Aruba Hotel and Tourist Association and sits on the board of the hotel-school now under construction.

But in one breath he adds: "the time one could sit back and wait for the customer to come to you is past". In these days of fierce competition, mr. de Ruyter expounds, one has to go out exploring new markets and sell one's product. This is exactly what Aruba has been doing for years.

West coast

The latest market Aruba has moved into is the West-Coast of the United States. The alert AHATA noticed some time ago that tourism from the Los Angeles area to Hawaii and Acapulco was dropping back. The association found that ▶



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airfares had risen too high. Another probable reason: people were getting tired of these once popular destinations. Aruba moved fast. FLY FAIR, a very active and efficient whole-sale organisation, was contacted. To its surprise and delight Aruba discovered that Fly Fair had just decided to embark on a campaign to promote the Caribbean. The organisation offered the island the top of the list. A programme was developed and the island government was asked for the necessary approval. The officials immediately concurred. An advertizing campaign promoting Aruba along the West-Coast was started during the last week of August. Very soon EASTERN will start flying in charters from the area which is known for its easy-spending people. Eastern charges a promotional fare of US\$ 449.—. One week Aruba will cost the tourist a minimum of US\$ 579.— including the return trip, hotel (map) and 15 features! A price decidedly below the costs of spending a week in Hawaii.

Co-operation

The steady growth of Aruba's tourist industry has only been possible, according to mr. de Ruyter, because close co-operation was established between the Hotel Association and the airlines, wholesalers, charter operators and most important of all the Government and the Bureau of Tourism. Such co-operation, he points out, will only yield tangible results if it is structured on a long term basis.

To forego unnecessary red tape, misunderstandings and ill founded decisions, all parties should be involved in the planning of new campaigns from the very beginning. Mr. de Ruyter is obviously happy with the long-standing relationship between the AHATA and the Aruban officials. He cites as an example the transfer of landing rights from Aero Condor to Avianca, both Colombian airlines.

The AHATA informed the government of its conviction, based on

solid research, that Aero Condor's reputation for sloppiness was keeping Colombians from spending their holidays on Aruba. The Government concurred and air-arrivals now taken care of by punctually performing Avianca picked up rapidly.

The product

The beaches are a gift of nature but friendliness and entertainment have to be taken care of continually. The AHATA and the Bureau of Tourism developed a motivation programme with the assistance of American experts (Cornell University) to foster awareness amongst Aruba's population of the importance of the tourist trade for the island and how they can contribute to its well-being. Taxi-drivers, shop-assistents and young people still in school are regularly shown instruction movies aimed at improving the standard of service and creating the right kind of attitude. The programme also offers training courses for hotel employees.

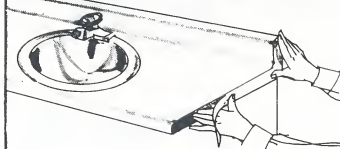
Several hotels moreover have their own training facilities complete with library and video installation. Staff-members follow courses at regular intervals. To serve the growing demand for trained personnel both on the island and in the region a hotelschool is being built.

Great care too is given to providing the tourist with a variety of entertainment. Plans for a seapark, bowling alley and squash courts are in an advanced stage.

Prices

Mr. de Ruyter is aware of the complaint that Aruba is becoming quite expensive. He does not agree, however, and proves his point with figures. During the high season (November — April) individual guests pay a minimum of US\$ 100,- per day. A price which is very reasonable in comparison to other resorts in the region, the USA and Europe. During the other 8 months

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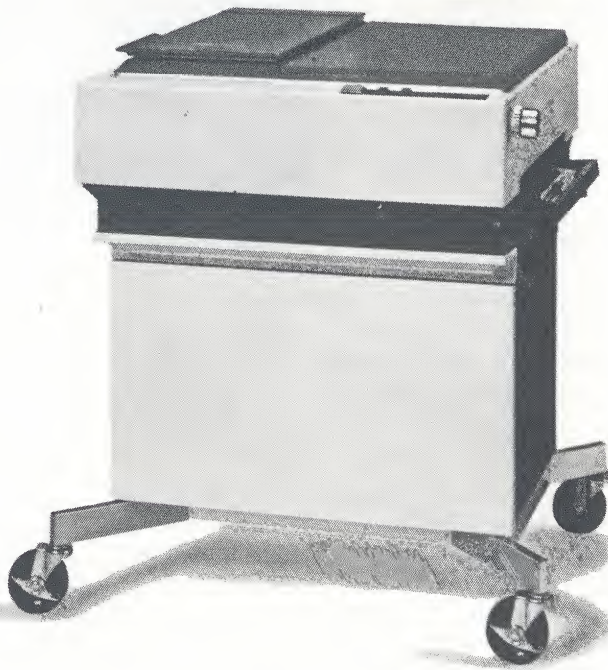


Aruba

room-rates are round about US\$ 50,—. Tour-operators have a 25% reduction. The present low off-season rates for tour operators of \$18,— for non casino hotels and \$ 30,— for the high-rise hotels leave little margin for profit making. The high occupancy rate does provide maximum employment, however, and serves the Aruban bussiness community in general.

Once more mr. de Ruyter stresses the importance of close co-operation between the parties concerned and of long-term planning. The combination helped Aruba to arrive at a balanced policy, which assures the island a steadily increasing income. The tourist industry on Aruba looks healthy indeed. ■

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Battle against crime

Developing a strategy

Crime is on the rise. So is Angst. Barred windows, high walls around gardens and security guards are no longer an uncommon sight. Although as yet in no way comparable to the crime rate in South American cities or many other Caribbean countries a feeling of insecurity is pervading Curaçao's society on all levels. The resulting retreat to individualism may seriously impede a wholesome development of the community. In order to counteract this negative trend the Island Government last year installed a committee to draw up "a plan of action for the re-socialization of the community with a view to criminality". A report containing the committee's first findings and recommendations was published recently. The main conclusion: the whole of society in all its branches needs to be remotivated.

Sick society

The increase of criminal offences, in particular burglary and theft, has lately been quite considerable. Although the report does not provide the reader with statistical data, there is, unfortunately, no reason to believe otherwise. Such an increase cannot be explained solely by referring to deficiencies in the criminal's character. Something must have gone wrong with society as a whole to allow for this worrisome outgrowth. The report signals a basic lack of respect and fellow feeling, and a noticeable lack of co-operation,

Photo F. Sulvaran



co-ordination and integration. This leads, the writers maintain, to the harming of individuals and groups great disparity of income, mismanagement, corruption, idleness, criminality, unemployment, malfunctioning of education etc.

Thus criminality is seen as one of the symptoms of a socialisation process gone astray. Such are the standards, values and attitudes prevalent in Curaçao's society that much human life is being derailed.

Target groups

The report therefore recommends a comprehensive approach to the problem. A thorough re-socialization programme, according to its authors, should be undertaken. In the relatively short time allotted to the committee it could do no more than draw up the outlines of a strategy. In order to evade the pitfall of mere theorizing, however, a number of practical directives are given. For that purpose the writers have defined target groups according to age which are next looked at from the economic, political, socio-cultural and judicial angles. The main object of the programme "to create a wholesome and just environment in which socially emancipated and responsibly acting man comes first" (a rather heavy and not so very transparent construction) is subdefined when dealing with the respective target groups. Much accent is placed in each particular instance on the need for social education. A

concept, the authors interpret as "the transfer of knowledge and social skills". They acknowledge the limited and rather thin character of their definition. But they maintain that including the changing of attitudes, character and behavior is at this stage not opportune. Such goals involve a very complex process and can only be achieved over a long period of time and under favourable circumstances.

The first task at hand, the committee believes, is to pass on basic information and help people to acquire the necessary social skills.

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Youth

By far the largest group of the population, youngsters of 6-18 years of age increasingly show an absence of interest and motivation. Creativity is minimal. Critical and constructive participation is hardly to be found. The report notes that during recent years an ever-growing number of teenagers have regressed to a pattern of asocial behavior. Vandalism, manhandling, theft and disturbance of public events are taking serious proportion. The underlying causes are not difficult to find. A lack of recreation ▶

facilities, the devaluation of standards and values, failing parenthood and the malfunctioning of the educational system are mentioned. The report draws attention to the fact that civilisation itself is being endangered as the process of handing down tradition is halted. Re-socialisation of the younger generations therefore cannot be achieved without at the same time re-socializing the adult segment of the population, which after all must be held responsible in the first place.

To tackle the problem a number of practical suggestions are made, ranging from better recreational facilities, youthwork activities and informal education to a re-orientation of the educational system. The report recommends to implement its suggestions as much as possible district (bario) wise.

Interesting too is the authors' strong plea to introduce compulsory education up to 16 yrs of age. Needless to say that education will have to be overhauled thoroughly first. The report stresses the social function of education and lists the well known deficiencies of the present system, as well as proposals for improvement and the re-motivation of teachers, parents and schoolboards.

Authorities

The implementation of what in essence must be called a motivation-programme aimed at all

segments of the population requires close co-operation and well planned co-ordination between the respective government services, according to the report. But it also notes the serious mal-functioning of most civil service departments and the resultant indifference amongst government employees. Starting the programme within the respective departments – for which again practical directives are given – must of necessity have priority. The presupposition that the Government should act as the principal instrument for the realization of the programme fits in with the apparent philosophical convictions of the committee (see below). But it should be asked at this stage whether the government should not act in a facilitating rather than an initiating capacity. An impressive amount of work in this area is after all being done by churches, service clubs, women-organizations, youthwork groups etc. The limited impact of this work is largely due to a lack of adequate funds and facilities. There certainly is no want of motivation! It is on the other hand fair to state that the minimal assistance given by the authorities does often result in feelings of disappointment and despair amongst the still considerable army of volunteers. Moreover shoring up private initiative may yield quicker and more effective results. Operating from deep inner convictions these groups will no doubt also promote the most necessary process of character building.

Philosophy

Stressing the Government's responsibility and advancing a long list of directives for implementation, touching upon almost every aspect of society, makes the report a very valuable document indeed. Much has as yet to be filled in but a promising start has been made. The authors concede that the report should be read as no more than an introduction to the proposed plan of action. A thorough discussion about its contents should now be conducted by all parties involved, most in particular the Island Government. Although the

temptation will be great to concentrate immediately on the practical applications, the basic assumptions of the report deserve serious attention.

The negative phenomena which Curaçao is facing today are, according to the authors, deeply rooted in the socio-economic structure of its society. That structure, it is maintained, is based (also historically) on a conflict of interest between the different groups which make up society.

They see this situation as highly repressive for a large part of the population. This implies that "the majority, if not all the measures which should be taken must intervene in the existing balance of power and the accepted (acquired) prerogatives and privileges."

Employers

These concepts, which have a distinct marxist ring to them, are translated into antagonistic terms when discussing the contribution employers will have to make to the re-socialization programme. It is assumed in advance that this group of citizens will have a great aversion to the plan of action, because of its liberal ideas about the role of the Government, the future development of society and their own contribution to the latter. The authors of the report even go as far as suggesting that the Government may have to resort to forcing the employers into line by means of legal stipulations and decrees. An unfortunate paragraph, which may very well ruin the chances for an open discussion about the many valuable suggestions the report contains. For cut loose from the ideological premises many of the practical suggestions remain very much worth considering.

On the other hand the authors' slip of the pen should not be regretted. The above mentioned negative trends, most noticeable in the rapid rise of crime, indicate an urgent need to evaluate our society and to take counter measures. Such an evaluation should of necessity imply a profound discussion of basics. ■

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Saba goes into the printing business

by Ann B. Sides



Photo Ann Sides

Puzzle over press

SABA — It was a daring idea . . . a fully-equipped, NAfl. 135,000 printing shop to serve less than a thousand people on tiny, rugged Saba. And it almost failed.

First, the fine new press was smashed in transit and arrived on Saba as a useless wreck. The replacement press arrived barely a step ahead of Queen Beatrix, who was to dedicate it. The ceremonies called for the Queen's proclamation to be run off for her in the Saba printery, but the new press didn't work. Instead, the proclamation was printed off-island and fed through the press already printed. If Her Majesty noticed, she was too polite to say anything.

After that, the printing machinery never worked properly, and the printer, trained in Curaçao, quit. Valuable paper and chemicals spoiled in the humid, salty air. An addled sheep charged its reflection in the shop's glass door and shattered it.

Persevering

The Saba Development Foundation, which operates the printery, could have given up and closed it down. But they were determined to bring a functioning printing service to Saba, and now, against all odds, the Saba printery is getting back into operation. Business cards printed for the now-reopened Captain's Quarters Hotel launched what Sabans hope is a new era in the island's communications. Our printery, as the shop is called,

means a lot to Saba. Before the printery was opened, all printing—wedding invitations, dance tickets, forms for the hospital, and stationery, had to be sent to St. Maarten, Miami, or Curaçao.

Reducing dependence

Because of its isolation, there's a strong spirit of self-reliance on Saba. Eric Johnson, president of the Saba Development Foundation (SDF) said Sabans hoped the printery would reduce their dependence on the other islands. Also, he said, the SDF hoped the printery would help promote the island's small but important tourist industry.

"We wanted a way for the taxi drivers to print cards to give the tourists," Johnson explained. "We wanted brochures for the tourist bureau. We wanted to print postcards and posters. Ninety per cent of what tourists buy on other islands is made in Taiwan, and we want what is bought here to be truly Sabaan."

"With a press of our own we also thought we could get improved quality, and most of all we could save time."

Lack of experience

The Saba Development Foundation approached the Graphic Communication Foundation of Curaçao with its plan for a small printing operation. The SDF proposed to operate the printery on a non-profit, self-supporting basis.

Johnson admits, however, that no one in the Foundation had a very clear idea of what a printery setup was like.

"I think we imagined it would be something like a mimeograph machine, only better. None of us had ▶



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ever seen a printing shop in operation.”

Even the simplest of offset printing machines, however, requires a large camera and darkroom to make the printing plates. There are also machines for cutting, folding and stapling, and precision drafting tools for layout and design. The Saba shop came equipped with all of these, and no one on the island had the technical skill to operate them.

New start

After the printer left, the entire operation sat idle until two public-spirited young Saban men, Ray Hassell and Carl Hassell, agreed to try and get the printery working again. (The two men are not

related, but share the most common family name on the island.)

By trial and error methods the two men managed to get the equipment in partial running order, but something was clearly wrong with the press. With the help of Frank Yacenda, an American journalism graduate student sent by the Graphic Communication Foundation, they stripped down the press part by part. For two long, frustrating days the trouble could not be found. Everything seemed in perfect mechanical order. Then, finally, the answer: the press, wired for the 115 volt electrical current in use on Saba, still had the 220 volt solenoid installed in Europe! Fortunately, the wrecked press, rusting away in storage, still had its 115 volt solenoid intact. With a new solenoid installed, the press

began functioning properly nine months after it arrived.

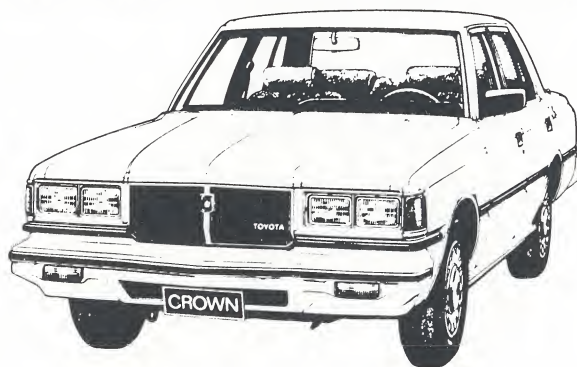
Orders

With the press finally working, the future of the printery seems much brighter. Orders for stationery, airline ticket folders, and government forms are coming in. Both Ray and Carl Hassell, however, have fulltime jobs and families and neither is certain how long he can keep up with the backlog of business at the printery. Trained manpower, therefore, is a problem that still remains to be solved.

The Saba Development Foundation's Eric Johnson, however, is optimistic. "All the projects the SDF have taken on have been a success," he says, "and this one will be too." ■

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Economic survey

by H. C. Beers

The past few months experienced a jump in the foreign exchange reserves to a record high of f. 300 million. This was caused by the seasonal tax payments made by the oil refineries. The exceptional high amount was mainly due to Lago on Aruba. The counter value of more than f. 100 million was transferred to the island tax receivers, who deposited the main part with the Central Bank. In line with the increase in foreign reserves the money supply grew also by about 10%. The spending of this huge amount, in particular by the island authorities of Aruba, will have an important impact on the economy. It is the choice between consumption and investment with consequences for employment, public finance and the balance of payments.

Foreign reserves

In July the official foreign exchange reserves, as shown on the balance sheet of the Central Bank, jumped from f. 162 million to f. 245 million which means an increase of more than 50%. This substantial improvement was caused by transfers made by the oil refineries from their foreign tax. Over the last years they paid an annual amount of about f. 60 million, but this year due to high profits and the running out of compensative losses, they had to pay about f. 140 million. A part had been paid in advance during the first half of the year; the remainder was transferred in the beginning of July.

Not only the foreign reserves of the Central Bank improved, but also the net foreign assets of the private deposit banks grew substantially as a result of above mentioned transfers. The banks received only a relatively small part of the foreign exchange influx, since the Central Bank successfully made a bid for the money of the island tax collectors.

The major part of the taxes was paid by LAGO on Aruba. As a consequence the financial position of the Government of Aruba improved in proportion. The island

of Curaçao did not record such a sizable inflow of money and foreign exchange. Shell paid only the minimum amount of f. 28 million. This was not because of a low profit level during the past fiscal year, but owing to losses from previous periods which still exceeded the profits made.

The balance of payments.

The jump in foreign exchange reserves was no surprise. The fundamental balance of payments for 1980 already indicated the

favourable development in oil refining, resulting in higher taxes and foreign exchange income. The balance on the current account showed a surplus of f. 182 million whereas only f. 37 million had been recorded in 1979. The fundamental balance of payments has not yet been recorded in 1979. The fundamental balance of payments has not yet been published officially but a preliminary statement was released in April 1981. The main items are shown in table 1.

Although gross income from oil refining fell somewhat compared with 1979, this was more than offset by net outflow of investment income, in particular retained earnings which dropped from f. 482 million to f. 44 million. The profit taxes to be paid by the the oil refineries together with the sizable inflow of grants as development aid from the Netherlands constitute the high surplus on the current account. In 1981 the Netherlands Antilles received about f. 120 million as grants against only f. 55 million in 1979. It is the balance on the current account that matters rather than the overall outcome of the balance of payments. The capital account is just a survey showing the changes in foreign claims and liabilities. Most of these changes result from economic transactions recorded in the current account. The balance on current account is equal to the ▶

Table 1

Fundamental balance of payments; net amounts, f. million

| | 1980 | 1979 |
|--------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| oil refining | 1151 | 1237 |
| trade | — 1662 | — 1345 |
| services | 1142 | 981 |
| investment income | — 471 | — 806 |
| labour income | — 53 | — 46 |
| unrequired transfers | 75 | 16 |
| balance current account | 182 | 37 |
| capital account | — 152 | — 47 |
| differences | 22 | 23 |
| increase reserves | 52 | 13 |

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difference between domestic savings and investment. A surplus shows that savings exceed net investment.

One may wonder if the surpluses on the current account may be regarded as desirable with a view to economic policy. In the situation of the Netherlands Antilles the achieving of full employment has to be mentioned as the main objective. This requires high amount of investments which certainly have to be financed through both domestic savings and foreign borrowing. In this framework domestic savings were not used sufficiently and consequently investments were few compared with available funds.

Exchange rates

Influenced by high interest rates in the United States the dollar reached a peak against major European currencies. The strength of the dollar has consequences for the Antillean guilder and our economy, which completely depends on foreign services. An advantage may be that imports from Europe and also from Japan are cheaper. Furthermore liabilities expressed in these currencies have declined. There still are debts outstanding expressed in Dutch guilders partly

resulting from development aid. The government and some hotel companies for instance borrowed Dutch funds in the past.

In July the Dutch guilder was f. 0,64 against the Antillean guilder, a level not reached during the last six years. The rate allowed Antilleans a little cheaper stay in the Netherlands during the last holiday season. However, American tourists are also paying less during their stay in Europe. On the other hand Europeans pay roughly 25% more for a holiday in the U.S.A. or in the Netherlands Antilles. The dollar's strength will certainly hurt our tourist sector, which is already in serious trouble on all our islands. The government has to come up with a new tourist-oriented policy on very short notice in order to offset the current weakness. Substantial growth of this sector is the only way to create the necessary jobs in the coming years. The legislation on opening hours of shops may have to be changed in order to enable shops to stay open in the evening and on Sundays as well as on holidays. The stipulations of an eight hour working day and forty hours a week have to be maintained for social reasons and to provide the necessary jobs. Open

shops will enhance the attractiveness of shopping towns such as Willemstad. So will clean streets, nice buildings and friendly people. Furthermore a proper wage policy, taking into account the special circumstances of each island and of the seasons as well, will improve the conditions for economic growth.

Monetary Developments

The tax transfers made by the oil refineries not only increased the foreign exchange reserves, but also caused a jump in island governments' deposits in particular on Aruba. These developments are reflected on the balance sheet of the Central Bank as shown in table 2. Foreign reserves grew in line with deposits held by the island governments and the banking system.

The bidding by the Central Bank for the island governments' deposits can be interpreted as open market operations for monetary purposes. These deposits are part of the money supply which reached a level of f. 1,043 million at the end of June 1981.

The abovementioned deposits constitute about 10% of the money supply which will jump to ▶

Table 2

| Condensed balance sheet Central Bank: f. million. | | | | |
|---|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| | Aug. 14, 1981 | Aug. 7, 1981 | July 31, 1981 | June 30, 1981 |
| assets | | | | |
| goldstock | 41.4 | 41.4 | 41.4 | 41.4 |
| foreign reserves | 217.9 | 231.1 | 245.3 | 162.0 |
| loans to: | | | | |
| — government | 84.7 | 88.4 | 87.2 | 81.4 |
| — banks | — | 3.1 | 6.3 | 0.6 |
| — private sector | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| sundry | 6.3 | 6.9 | 7.1 | 7.1 |
| TOTAL | 351.6 | 372.2 | 388.6 | 293.8 |
| liabilities: | | | | |
| banknotes | 138.7 | 149.3 | 161.8 | 166.5 |
| deposits held by: | | | | |
| — Central Government | 3.2 | 5.6 | 5.3 | 6.1 |
| — island governments | 70.2 | 69.4 | 69.8 | 2.3 |
| — banks | 22.7 | 30.3 | 30.7 | 18.2 |
| — development projects | 31.8 | 31.9 | 33.6 | 18.9 |
| — private sector | 17.9 | 19.1 | 20.8 | 18.1 |
| — non residents | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| money in custody | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.1 |
| sundry debts | 18.9 | 18.5 | 18.5 | 15.5 |
| Capital and Reserves | 45.9 | 45.9 | 45.9 | 45.9 |



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a new record high. Of course the money will be spent and thus increase domestic spending. In an announcement published with its condensed balance sheet of July 17, 1981 the Central Bank warns against disturbing effects of this sudden surge of money. The announcement adds that the policy of the Central Bank will be aimed at preventing these detrimental effects as much as possible.

The detrimental effects refer to the spending for consumptive purposes, structural employment situations. Such expenditures will only temporarily increase the level of domestic spending without necessary extension of capital formation and without creating lasting jobs as well as future income.

Banking Liquidity

The banks continued to borrow from the Central Bank, which is very remarkable because it was hardly done in the Bank's 153 years of existence. At the end of April the banking system borrowed f. 9 million and at the end of June

only f 0,6 million. This amount climbed at the end of July to f. 6.3 million; fell in the first week of August to f. 3.1. million and was fully repaid at mid August. Apparently the banks have less liquid funds than they used to have in the past. Their balances with the Central Bank are far below last year's average level of about f. 40 million. However, the other two main parts of the banks' liquid reserves viz. net foreign assets and domestic treasury paper, showed a decent increase.

Foreign assets grew as a result of the surplus on the balance of payments and treasury paper because of the Central Government's less favourable financial position. The latter borrowed by issuing treasury paper from the banks and through bonds from the public to finance mostly consumptive expenditures. Both the Central Government and the Government of Curaçao are facing difficult times in the financial field. Their expenditures are high and ever-increasing.

Their income consists mainly of taxes, which as indicated are not sufficient to finance the expenditures. However, it appeared during the last months that the government is not collecting all the money it is entitled to: An estimated amount of over f. 300 million in profit and income taxes have not been assessed and consequently not been collected. Instead of reorganizing the tax department and increasing its effectiveness, the government turned to the banks to finance current expenditures.

In the beginning of October treasury paper up to an amount of about f. 30 million will mature. In view of the less favourable banking liquidity it will be interesting to see how and on what terms the government is going to refinance this amount. For the amount for redemption is not at hand. Under these circumstances a lot will depend on the monetary policy of the Central Bank and the handling of the island governments' deposits. ■



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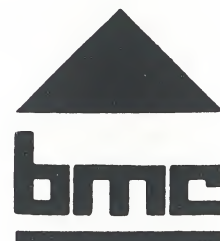
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Protectional measures meet criticism

Consultation urged

The Netherlands Antilles, in particular Curaçao, have traditionally been trade oriented. Also today commerce is an important economic activity. But during the past years there has been a notable growth of local industry. A development stimulated by the Government. The small market situation and the competition from abroad, however, cause some severe problems. In order to help young industries to get a foothold in the market, the Department of Economic Affairs has issued a number of protectional measures for some locally produced items. In some cases importing firms have protested loudly as they fear to lose substantially. In June 1979 the Curaçao Chamber of Commerce published a paper on "the social-economic direction for the future", in which it agrees to the need for protection for local industry but also lists a number of requirements which should be met. When the Department of Economic Affairs last June announced a series of new protectional decrees, a storm of criticism arose. Several of the requirements, it was said, had not been met. The most loudly voiced complaint concerned the complete lack of consultation with the appropriate organizations of commerce and industry.

Consultation

The afore mentioned paper of the Curaçao Chamber of Commerce recognizing the need for protection points at the importance of safeguarding quality, price levels and employment. It also states that protectional measures should be

subjected to a time limit. Before deciding, moreover, thorough research should be done and the Chamber consulted. Objections that the last suggestion would allow import firms to build up large stock piles in advance was met by scorn. Few dispose of the capital needed to purchase such quantities that would indeed undermine the protectional measures for any length of time.

Representatives from both commerce and industry expressed strong feelings about the obvious lack of trust. According to these spokesmen it ought to be possible to establish a reliable structure of consultation.

In particular since also industry has created its own representative body. But even the 1 year old Association of Industries in the Neth. Antilles, the ASINA, was not heard prior to the issuance of the June decrees.

Commented the authorities: they all knew what we were planning to do. A reaction which does seem to underline the urgent need for better co-operation.

Reactions

It is fair to state that some of the announced protectional measures were appreciated by all parties concerned. Putting an extra import duty on concrete mats for example met no objections. The Curaçao Wire Products NV which manufactures this article suffered unfair competition by a Dutch firm dumping its surpluses, caused by Europe's recession, for reduced prices on the Antillean market. The Antillean company was established in 1977 and has been doing very

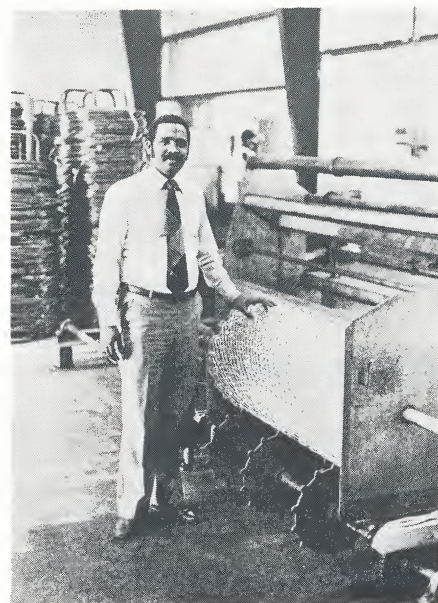


Photo Roger F. Snow

*Curaçao Wire Products:
Manager R. Lucia*

well. Presently 24 Antilleans are employed by the company, which has multiplied its capital assets from Naf. 200,000.— to 2.8 million in four years. Protecting such a small but successful local industry against 'dumping' is obviously correct.

The announcement of an extra 16% import duty on all furniture was given quite a different reception. Comments from both commerce and industry indicated general dissatisfaction. Many kinds of furniture are not being manufactured in the Antilles. Import firms will now have to apply for exemption on a wide range of products. Replies the Department of Economic Affairs: such exemptions are given within 24 hours if justified. Many, however, fear that the effect will be a general increase of prices.

They also maintain that it is very doubtful whether this measure will indeed increase employment. Imported furniture is to a large extent assembled in the Antilles. The employment involved in this activity might very well suffer. No thorough research apparently has been done with regard to this question. An observation, which again points at the urgent need for a consultative body in which all parties concerned are represented. ■

*Antilles drawn into
cold war orbit*

The days of innocence are over

Until very recently the Antilles could feel themselves fairly divorced from the ongoing power struggle between East and West. Issues like the nuclear armament debate found little resonance on the islands. The few self-confessed marxists were hardly taken seriously. Although the mere and usually unproven accusation of communist links and aspirations could ruin a politician's career overnight, there was no feeling ever of a real threat. All this because the great conflict seemed to be taking place elsewhere, far from the shores of these relatively prosperous islands. But significant developments in the Caribbean basin during the past two years have changed this situation irrevocably. The communist course taken by Grenada has brought the ABC-islands physically within the orbit of the cold war. Stepped up visits by Russian and Cuban vessels have established a growing awareness of the communist presence in the region. A call by Grenada's strongman Maurice Bishop earlier this year has fuelled a small but increasingly active and loudspoken movement of sympathizers. On the other hand, Washington's reassessment of its role in this part of the Caribbean is becoming noticeable as is Venezuela's concern about 'the grave crisis in the area'.

As a result the decision-makers in the country face some far from easy questions. Will it be possible to minimize involvement and yet utilize the situation to a maximum benefit? Will it be possible to satisfy the demands of the new and evermore restless generation of in-



Sovjet intelligence in Curaçao harbour

tellectuals without letting in a Trojan Horse? Will the present government be able to continue on its pragmatic course without alienating its most active supporters? Will common sense triumph over the ideological debate, which is now no longer a pastime? And perhaps most important of all: will the government be able to generate trust in the stability of the country, a first condition to keep the economy afloat?

Questions which indicate that the days of blissful innocence are over.

Ace

Only nine months ago many were under the impression that the communist advance in the region had been dealt a fatal blow. Elections on several islands, most notably Jamaica, indicated an impressive endorsement of an about-face from socialism. The implications of this development are no doubt of great importance. Democracy is obviously deeply rooted in most Caribbean societies. And maybe even more reassuring is the observation that the inhabitants of the region are endowed with that precious characteristic called 'common sense'. But the sense of relief, which spread through the area, was mistaken on at least one important point. The communist block has never yet been deterred by the vox populi. In fact it had already scored off the loss of a possible foothold in Jamaica, St. Vincent, St. Kitts and Dominica by obtaining a strategically far more important ace: Grenada. Both from a military and political point of view a mini-satellite situated at the

end of the Windward group in the Southern Caribbean within easy reach from Cuba is of priceless value to Moscow's global expansion policy.

Sea-lanes

Although the story in 'Die Welt' (German newspaper) of 8 September 1979 that the Soviet Union was building a submarine harbour in Grenada had at the time absolutely no truth to it, such a possibility cannot be ruled out in the future. During the past year NATO planners have been compelled to consider seriously a submarine threat to trade routes south of the Tropic of Cancer, an area of increasing military significance owing to Soviet technical advances affecting the northern Atlantic routes between the USA and Europe. NATO's forward defence line against a submarine threat at the northern entrance to the Atlantic has been seriously jeopardized by the arrival of Russia's new bomber known as the Backfire. In the event of war the preferred trans-Atlantic route would have to skirt the Caribbean Leeward and Windward islands travelling south of the Azores to Europe. Add to this the fact that detection of submarine movements in the Caribbean is at present most difficult because of the lack of advanced monitoring systems covering the area and it becomes reasonable to suspect that the Soviets may try their hand at establishing a base at the southern tip of the region in spite of the Washington-Moscow agreement of 1970, by which the ▶

Soviets agreed not to construct such facilities in the area. In any case even the possibility of such a move already enhances Soviet power in the Caribbean.

Africa

A more immediate advantage to the Soviets are the services Grenada can render as a bridge-head between Cuba and the African continent. An estimated 45,000 Cubans are currently stationed in Africa either in a military capacity (37,000) or as civilian advisers. Doing Russia's legwork under the banner of liberation by securing a grip on some of the world's richest mineral deposits (Angola), Cuba will be much facilitated for its airlifts by the major airfield now under construction on Grenada. Built by Cuban technicians with heavy Russian materials the airstrip of 3300 metres long is very well suited for that purpose. As Grenada's dependence on Cuba and other communist countries is increasing rapidly because of the massive aid it receives one may conclude that the Soviets have secured themselves of a reliable ally. Maurice Bishop's claim of neutralism therefore cannot be taken seriously. More in particular so because his People's Revolutionary Army, which is the most potent military force in the Eastern Caribbean, is Cuban trained and armed. In the same manner in which Cuba has become almost completely dependent on the Soviet Union, has Grenada become a Cuban dependency. The beneficiary is the Soviet Union.

Oil

The implications for the Caribbean and the United States are of a very serious nature indeed. Possible harbour facilities and the new airstrip offer the communist forces an increased striking range in the area including the supply lines to the USA, the Venezuelan oilfields and the refineries of the Netherlands Antilles. Caribbean ports, refineries and terminals play an important role in supplying the United States. Moreover it should not be forgotten that Castro has openly spoken of the need to



Maurice Bishop

secure oil supplies for the communist world, and no one can doubt that it was local regional sources he had in mind. Cuba itself for one cannot expect to be indefinitely supported by the USSR. A situation which imposes its own strategic imperatives.

Thus the Netherlands Antilles and in particular Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao are drawn into the Cold War orbit even in a military sense. As was pointed out by Timothy Ashby in Britain's 'National Defence', MiG-27's taking off from Grenada can reach the afore mentioned islands within 35 minutes. Again even the mere possibility enhances Soviet power in the area.

Showing the flag

The inclusion of Grenada in the communist bloc offers the Soviets, besides strategic advantages, also a welcome base to step up their propaganda activities. During the past years the USSR has executed a coordinated policy of showing the

flag in many Caribbean ports. Warships, oceanographic vessels, electronic intelligence vessels and fishing vessels have been employed to make the Soviet presence in the region very visible indeed. In the category of the latter three also Curaçao witnessed an increased interest by the Soviets over the past two years. Besides the opportunity of acquainting themselves with the local situation these friendly visits offer the Soviet Union obvious propaganda benefits. The following quote from Admiral Sergei Gorshkov's 'The Sea Power of the State' (Oxford, 1979) leaves little doubt about the rationale of these calls: *"Friendly visits by Soviet seamen offer the opportunity to the peoples of the countries visited to see for themselves the creativity of socialist principles in our country, the genuine parity of the Soviet Union and their high cultural level. In our ships they see the achievements of Soviet science, technology and industry. Soviet mariners, from rating to admiral, bring to the peoples of other countries the truth about our socialist country, our Soviet ideology and our Soviet way of life."*

To this cleverly planned — be it rather obvious — method of showing the flag has now been added a far more subtle form of political infiltration. In this Grenada plays a pivotal role.

Psy-war

Grenadian Cabinet members have of late become very effective ambassadors of 'the revolution'. Having ousted extreme rightwing dic-

Mig-27

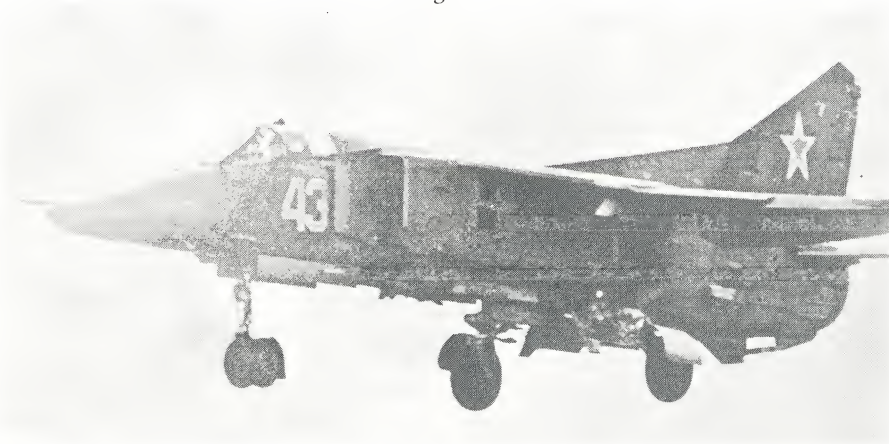


Photo: F. Silvaran

tator Sir Eric Gairy they present themselves as the champions of liberation, Caribbean self awareness and identity. Well spoken, almost handsome Maurice Bishop has proven to be a very capable public relations man. Very much Caribbean, from a modest background, he appeals naturally to the well educated young men and women from the lower middle classes, who are often dissatisfied with the way their society functions. Most Caribbean islands are highly dependent on the metropolitan countries, either because they function as suppliers of primary goods or as trade, financial and tourist centres. This dependency does engender some anti-Western feelings and resentment against the so-called capitalists in their own country. These negative sentiments provide a fertile ground for those who wish to promote processes of unrest. Bishop, a former leading regional civil rights lawyer with many contacts in leftwing circles on the neighbouring islands, plays upon these feelings by reporting on his revolution in terms of anti-Americanism and anti-capitalism. Carefully stressing the neutrality of his government he evades the accusation of marxist propaganda. But his approach fits the pattern of Soviet (and Cuban) endeavours to exploit local discontent in order to extend its influence in the area. Grenada has become an effective instrument for Moscow's psychological warfare.

Curaçao: a case history

As mentioned before Soviet vessels have become a regular feature in Curaçao's harbour. Trawlers drop in for no other purpose than to allow their crews shore-leave. Literally hundreds of Russians swarm over the island on such occasions. Some of the USSR's most sophisticated electronic intelligence vessels were impressively visible for several days earlier this year. Though seemingly harmless these visits are making their point: the Soviets have a vested interest in the region, including the Antilles. The psychological impact of this development should not be underrated. Leftwing groups are being

encouraged and a general feeling of uncertainty is promoted.

Of more serious consequences was the visit of Maurice Bishop, Prime-Minister of Grenada, last March. Invited to an international gathering of the socialist movement held on Aruba, Bishop decided to spend some days in Curaçao as well. He used the opportunity to the hilt. Both in public and private meetings Bishop worked hard to lay the foundation for further future contacts. Several commentators at the time were astonished to see how much leeway Bishop was given by the authorities. Not long after this visit two new organisations were officially established which make no secret of their appreciation of the Grenadian revolution. The KASP (Committee for Friendship and Solidarity) started its activities with organizing an excursion to the island known for its spices, last July. The other group calls itself Action Committee for a Socialist Movement (KAMS). The name leaves little doubt about its ideology.

In August the Grenadian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Tourism, Unison Whiteman, paid a visit to Curaçao to discuss the possibility of a regular airline connection between the two countries. Grenada offered to guarantee a number of seats in case national carrier ALM would include the island in its schedule. No decision has yet been taken.

A number of less conspicuous developments also indicate a measure of infiltration. Several smaller publications have in recent months carried articles with a distinct marxist stamp. Even the influential daily 'AMIGOE' has lately published some rather leftish and anti-American articles, at least one of which was taken from Grenada's Free West Indian (though no reference was given). The article described the USA as the world's nr. one terrorist!

Although these developments are as yet limited both in scope and impact, taken together they fit the pattern described above.

Challenge

The undeniably increased interest

of the Soviet powers in the Netherlands Antilles does not, however, at this moment constitute a real threat. Nor seem the attempts at infiltration very successful. Antilleans have an inborn aversion of communism. Lacking all natural resources their economy is solely based on trade and the service industry. Even the rumour of unrest and of a possible turn to the left would destroy the very basis on which the country's relative prosperity is built. Most people realize this very well and have little liking for radicals.

There is on the other hand every reason to be on the alert. The high number of unemployed (Curaçao $\pm 22\%$) and the recent rise in crime do offer trouble-makers opportunities for abuse. Furthermore it is very much the question whether the youngest generations (50% of the population is under 25 yrs) have the same loyalties as their parents. The role of the churches has diminished during the last decades and the educational system is, according to the experts, not exactly up to par. Many of those who received advanced training in the Netherlands during the seventies have been influenced by leftish if not marxist theories. Not always finding it easy to re-adapt to their own society they constitute a potential of dissatisfaction.

Strong and inspiring leadership, measures to bring down the unemployment figures and re-educate the young, and stimulating a spirit of pride in the achievements of the country are some of the obvious answers. Politically the described developments offer the Antillean government a welcome lever for its negotiations with Holland and in particular the United States concerning the tax-treaties under discussion.

No-one can permit the Antillean economy to suffer great losses by undermining its offshore banking business. Certainly not the United States, whose stakes in the region are of the greatest importance.

This on the other hand forces the Antillean government to leave no doubt about its loyalties. The days of innocence are over indeed. ■

Ten years legal education

by W. Luiten



Photo: F. Sulvaran

The beginning of the new academic year marks the tenth's anniversary of the Legal Faculty. This second lustrum provides a good opportunity to pay some attention to the legal education on the Antilles. First some facts. Each year around 40 students apply for the study.

After a 4 1/2 years' course they can obtain the Doctor's degree in Antillean Law. Each year \pm 15 persons finish their studies.

Up to now a total of around 70 persons have succeeded in obtaining their doctorate. The scientific subjects are limited. The faculty-staff consists of six full-time members. A number of lectures are further taken care of by part-time lecturers.

There exists quite a number of misconceptions concerning the existence of education for a doctor's degree in Law on the Antilles, and I would like to comment on them.

The Antilles too small for an own faculty

This argument has notably been put forward by the Dutch Minister for Antillean Affairs. If even Luxemburg is too small for its own University, then the Antilles by all means are so too. The minister's allegation is not only incorrect but also unsound.

Unsound because one cannot compare the Antilles to Luxemburg. Luxemburg is surrounded on all sides by countries it has intense cultural ties with.

At least where law is concerned the Antilles find themselves in culturally alien surroundings. The only country that would be able to take care of a legal education for the Antilles is the Netherlands, but it lies at a distance of 10,000 kilometres. Another problem is that Antillean graduates often do not return to their country. In

such cases the Antilles would make expenses, the advantages of which would go to the Dutch community. The argument is all the more remarkable, because it's Holland itself that has again and again uttered the wish that the Antilles start managing their own affairs. The allegation is incorrect because the need for legal education on the Antilles is so great that an own university training is certainly justified.

Let's make a comparison. The Netherlands has 8 legal faculties. Annually an average of 800 students apply per faculty. With a population of 14 million this means that annually one out of every 2000 Dutchmen start studying law.

If our community needs jurists to the same degree (and with a view to the heavy government structure and taking into account the relatively heavy overhead of a mini-state this presumably will be the case) then with a population of 250,000, each year 125 students would have to apply for the study. More than enough it would seem to create a faculty of our own!

For the time being the small scale problem does pose a problem in the matter of staff-members. The number of qualified and available people for a staff function is still too small. As the legal faculty keeps providing the community with more graduates, this problem will no doubt solve itself. In this transition period the Netherlands would be able to offer assistance, but does not really want to do so, using the Luxemburg argument.

An incomprehensible attitude because education is the only genuine factor contributing to the development of a country. The effect thereof in the long run is

much greater than that of erecting prestige buildings.

Where will all those jurists be placed?

Another misconception concerns the job opportunity for jurists.

Many hesitate when starting their studies because they fear that the market will be swamped with jurists not able to find a job. The comparison made above with the student density in the Netherlands shows that there is much more room for jurists than there are jurists who present themselves.

Consequently there are no job opportunity problems at the moment for graduates. Nor will these occur as long as the number of students presenting themselves is not doubled. In practice this is clearly evident. The judicial and the public prosecution bodies largely still consist of European Dutchmen.

In the legal profession, notariate, banking business, commercial system and government quite a number of jurists are also under contract. Another aspect is that the supply itself creates a demand. As the supply increases, more functions will be opened for jurists. For the time being job opportunity is no problem at all, on the contrary the Antilles will not benefit optimally from the existence of the faculty until the supply increases drastically.

Quality

Antilleans often have an enjoyable critical attitude, which, however, is sometimes difficult to distinguish from lack of confidence in their own abilities. Local products are supposed to be worse than impor-

ted ones, local experts less expert than foreign ones, etc.

This attitude, presumably a remnant from colonial times, can only be combated with facts. In the Netherlands the Antillean Bachelor of Law examination is considered completely equal to the Dutch Bachelor of Law examination.

This does not apply for the doctorate examination, because Antillean law differs too much from Dutch law. But there exists a co-operation agreement with a Dutch university, in which the greater part of the Antillean doctorate is recognized as equal. Only for a limited number of subjects a supplementary examination has to be passed to obtain the title of Doctor in Dutch Law.

A number of staff-members at the university used to work at Dutch universities and do not think that one can speak of a difference in level. Dutch professors regularly come here to give lectures and hold the same examinations here as they do in the Netherlands. Linguistic proficiency does consti-

tute a difficulty, but is amply compensated by the students' enthusiasm.

Wishes

With the above we naturally do not mean to say that the situation is absolutely ideal and does not leave anything to be desired. Notably the spreading of the education leaves much to be desired. And that in two respects. Although many students make use of the educational facilities as a form of second chance education, the impression exists that the educational facilities are mostly benefiting persons from the higher and middle classes.

Through this the emancipatory function education may have is barely used to its full advantage here. The roots of the problem lie mainly with the primary and secondary education and therefore cannot so much be imputed to the faculty, but it remains a pity.

A second spreading question concerns the islands other than Curaçao. It is true that on Aruba

there is parallel bachelor's course, but even so the problems have hardly been solved.

Taking into account the circumstance that most of the Aruban doctorate and Bonairean students are working students, following the courses is by no means a sinecure for them, not to mention the Windward Islands. The financial means and policy vision are lacking to make the university education accessible to all Antilleans.

Perhaps developments concerning the open university in the Netherlands may render experience which will enable us to take steps towards the solution of this problem.

The process of self-determination and self-realization now underway on the Antilles will continue with more force, partly under pressure from external forces. That an own university plays an important part therein and will start playing an even more important part in the future is obvious. ■

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Tourism Progress report



Photo Amigoe Aruba

The eighties have not started well for the Caribbean tourist industry. Most countries report a decline in visitor arrivals. Higher hotel operating costs and spiralling air fares have put the industry's returns in jeopardy. Moreover Caribbean airline operations are being threatened by carriers from third countries, which have been granted unilateral rights and are currently adopting the principle of deregulation. As many Caribbean countries derive an important part of their national income from tourism, the overall picture is bleak indeed.

Barbados

During the first quarter of this year tourist arrivals went down almost eight percent, not including cruise ship visitors, which fell by 27.6 percent! Heavy losses were incurred on the traditionally largest markets, the United States (19.5%) and Canada (16.1%). An increase in guests from Britain (41.7%) and from the surrounding Caribbean countries (7%) made up for part of these losses. The figures must look extremely worrying to the Barbadian government as tourism brought in half of the island's total income last year.

St. Vincent

The decline in Caribbean tourism, which is generally attributed to world-wide recession, also affected St. Vincent. Tourist arrivals by air fell seven percent during the first five months of 1981. Industrial unrest, which has plagued the island during most of the year, may also have kept visitors away. The Department of Tourism hopes to improve the situation by conducting an aggressive advertising campaign on the US market.

Antigua.

Figures published by Antigua's

Department of Tourism show a decline of the trade over the last winter season. Long stay arrivals by air went down by just over five percent. Between December 1980 and April 1981 the number of tourists who flew into the island decreased by 2000 as compared to the same period the year before. Arrivals by sea, however, went up from 61,052 to 64,519. The number of cruise ships' calls also increased. This may be due to fuel saving policies by cruise-operators now preferring to sail to islands closer to Miami and Puerto Rico, their base ports. During the first six months of this year the total of tourist arrivals shows an increase of five percent. But the marked decline in the number of visitors arriving from North America and Europe may indicate that the total income derived from tourism did not rise correspondingly. Tourism is Antigua's main source of foreign currency earnings.

Virgin Islands

The first quarter of this year shows a decline in air arrivals of 11.5% for St. Croix and 7.1% for St. Thomas. Although the slump was less than experienced in the first half of 1980 (St. Croix 15% and

St. Thomas 22.5%) it indicates a serious regression of the trade. According to Mr. Amadeo I.D. Francis, Commissioner of Commerce, "one out of two rooms" was empty in January. Rising air fares, lack of air space and the suspension by American Airlines of its services from New York to St. Thomas are some of the reasons given for the drop in arrivals. But also the devalued dollar, the high cost of transporting goods and the minimum wages pegged at US\$ 3.35 an hour caused a rise in prices, which did not exactly promote the industry.

Jamaica

The Jamaica Hotel and Tourism Association (JHTA) early June spoke of a season 'disastrous for most hotels'. In Ocho Rios-Runaway Bay area the average occupancy rate among 13 hotels on May 19 was 45% and the projection for the rest of the season was for 43%. In Montego Bay, the renowned tourist centre, the occupancy was 25% and the projection for the rest of the summer was one percent less. Port Antonio, in the east, reported an occupancy of below 25 percent. Only a few hotels in Jamaica have been doing reasonably well, most are experiencing very lean times according to the JHTA. Jamaica trying to restore its reputation, which suffered badly during the violence-ridden years of the Manley period, is not exactly helped by the general slump in tourism. The JHTA "does not envisage the commencement of any significant change in the tourist industry until, hopefully, the coming winter season". The Association claims that "without assistance from the Government during this most difficult summer season, we doubt whether some hotels will survive until winter".

Bermuda

The downward trend during the first months of this year may be only temporary for the British colony, which thrives on tourism ▶

and international business. Main cause for the 3.5% drop in visitor arrivals during the January – April period was probably a month-long strike which forced nine of the island's major hotels to close down for 11 days. The cost in lost tourism revenues was estimated by Tourism Minister Jim Woolridge at US\$ 1.5 million a day. Hotel occupancy projections for the period May – August, however, were also far below last year's. A US\$ 500,000 newspaper advertising campaign was launched to woo back the tourists as quickly as possible.

Cuba.

In contrast to most other countries in the Caribbean, Cuba can boast a remarkable recovery of its tourist industry. During the past three years the trade grew at an average of 20% a year while the world's growth figure is seven percent. Last year about 200,000 visitors, including 80,000 Cubans living abroad, came to the island bringing in much needed foreign exchange. That figure may still be well below the 270,000 who came to Cuba in 1957 – the heyday of the industry, a period when one out of every three visitors to the Caribbean was coming to Havana – it is well up from the average of 3000 a year between 1964 and 1973. In 1974 the Cuban Government launched a programme to place the island back on the map as a prime tourist country. The construction of 30 new hotels with an average of 200 rooms each and spread over several resorts was started. Twenty-five have in the meantime been completed, bringing the total of available rooms on the island to 20,222. A polytechnic institute was set up four years ago to train Cubans to manage the new tourist industry. A marketing campaign was started and this year nearly US\$ 1 million will be spent on promotion in the major market Canada. Tourism offices are being opened in Canada, Mexico as well as France, West Germany and other European countries. Although Gary

Gonzales, the director of promotion and information at the National Institute of Tourism, believes that "there are enough tourists in the world for the Caribbean" and that "we should promote together", it should be noted that the resurgence of Cuba as a tourist centre does constitute a threat to those islands which profited most by Castro's take-over and consequent drop in Cuba's attraction for tourists.

Airlines

Tourism in the region is heavily dependent on air transport and supporting infrastructure. A group of experts appointed by CARICOM's Council of Ministers to probe why the tourist industry in the region is declining and to devise a strategy for the decade recently published its findings. With regard to air transport the report notes that 'each country in the region cannot, and is likely to become increasingly unable to, afford to operate an efficient service extra-regionally. This derives from the increasing capital cost of fuel-efficient aircraft, the management skills required to plan and manage an international airline and the operating losses which are becoming common in the airline industry'. It also states that 'the region can hardly afford the combined losses being incurred by the various regional airlines'. It is estimated that losses for the Caribbean carriers amounted to EC\$ 250 million in 1980. The group of experts advise the CARICOM Governments urgently to consider proposals aimed at co-operation. Submitting a formula which simultaneously ensures the benefits of economies of large scale and the satisfaction of national pride, the group recommends that: "The existing national companies should get together and establish either a Caribbean airline holding company or a Caribbean airline leasing company. If the national companies adopt the first alternative, the holding company would have responsibility for planning the overall route structure, determining fleet size and type of equip-

ment, operating the capital budget, deciding on overseas office, staff, counter and reservation facilities, and operating ad hoc or charter services. Under the second alternative, the leasing company would purchase equipment and lease these to the national carriers'. The group also notes as an issue, which should be given urgent attention, the matter of bilateral air services agreements with third countries: 'More third countries adopt the principle of deregulation as currently being applied by the United States. Rights granted to a third country, for example, the right of the United States to designate a number of US carriers to operate to any point in the Caribbean at fares determined by the United States, could significantly erode the profitability of regionally-owned carriers'. The group recommends a co-ordinated approach by CARICOM states.

Co-ordination

The afore mentioned CARICOM report also urges to intensify co-operation between the member countries with regard to multiple destination marketing, product development and training at the professional and sub-professional levels. The CARICOM countries have already developed some degree of co-operation in tourism promotion through the Caribbean Tourism Association (CTA) and the Eastern Caribbean Tourism Association (ECTA), in research through the Caribbean Tourism and Development Centre (CTRC) and in management training through the hotel training school at the university of the West Indies. The call for increased co-operation coincides with the initiative taken by Curaçao's Commissioner for Tourism, Mr. Augustin Diaz, who hopes to play host to representatives of the tourist industry in the region before the end of the year in order to discuss mutual problems and to develop a joined strategy. The Netherlands Antilles (with the exception of Aruba, see page 11) are subject to the same downward trend. ■

PEOPLE

The only woman, besides Queen Sylvia of Sweden, ever to be awarded a replica of Piteó's 1500 years old medallion, was **Mrs. B. Schouten-Blanchard.**

The well-known and modest editor of Aruba's 'THE NEWS' was last summer presented the bronze medal as a gesture of appreciation for a booklet she wrote on the Swedish period of her native island St. Barthelomey. The book was published in 1978 when the island celebrated 100 years of French rule, the festivities of which were filmed by husband Gerard and Sonny Salas. Recently visiting Sweden **Mr. and Mrs. Schouten** were invited (on the initiative of SASS's assistant general manager Olle Nyman) to northern Piteó where much to their surprise they were given a truly grand reception. Mayor Axel Bogren personally presented **Mrs. Schouten** with the medallion, which stems from the Pianobor culture of the VolgaKama area.

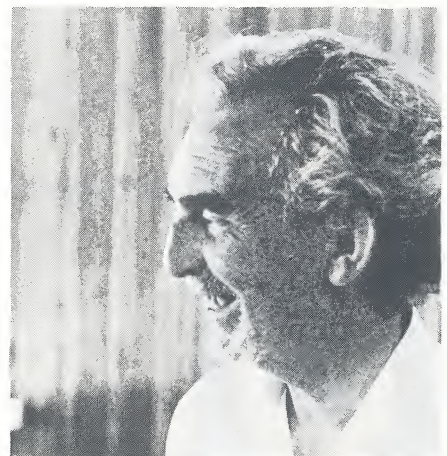


"It seems like yesterday" says **Rudy Dovale** (59) as he reflects on how his world-wide appreciated advertizing agency started 30 years ago at Curaçao's Pietermaai. No wonder! For in that brief span of time he not only made his agency a sounding succes but also co-initiated the International Advertizing Association (50 countries, 2600 members) and did more than his share in quite a number of service organizations. His agency, which has been awared several well known international prizes,

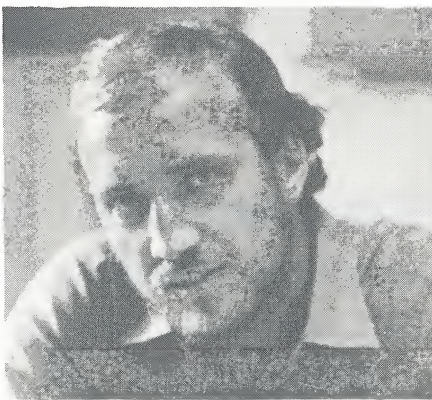
has pleased numerous clients and contributed in no small measure to the promotion of tourism for the Antilles. Recently Rudi and his staff of 28, including his lovely and most active wife Jacqueline, moved into a beatifully restored mansion. Rudi takes as much pleasure in the improved facilities for his agency as in the fact that the restoration goes a long way towards uplifting one of Willemstad's picturesque quarters. It typifies the man!

Back for his fifth visit in two years **Mr. August J. Bal**, head of an inter-departmental service of the Belgian Government, joined Antillean officials in the evaluation of what has become known as the Bal-project.

Within the framework of a cultural agreement between Belgium and the Antilles **Mr. Bal** was instrumental in the execution of a programme aimed at stimulating creativity. Exchange visits and workshops helped to create an Antillean team of at least 25 persons, who will now be able to pass on their acquired skills. **Mr. Bal**(61) said he was impressed by the reservoir of potential talent in the Antilles.



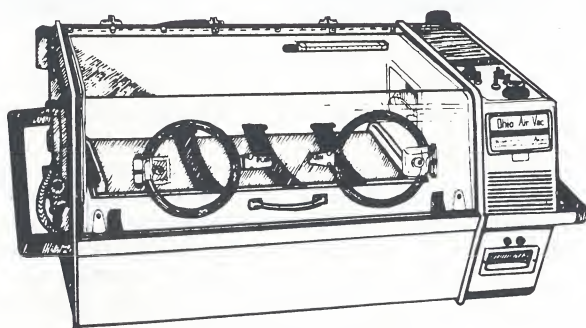
When one thinks of fine leather products, it is Italy, particularly Florence and Rome that come to mind. A skilled leather craftsman, **Ivan Filippin**, recently came to Curaçao from Rome to join the crafts and small enterprise project in the Antilles which is a joint undertaking of the government's Department of Development Cooperation and the United Nations Development Programme. An expert from the International Labour Office (ILO), **Filippin** will train leather craftsman in craft foundations in Curaçao, Aruba and Bonaire. Previously, **Filippin** lent his skills to United Nations



projects in Madagascar and Cyprus. He is a graduate of the Art Institute Donatello of Rome where he owned his own shop and manufacturing operation and taught at Hawksbury College in Australia in 1977-78 before joining the UN. He will set up training programmes and supervise operations to manufacture a new line of leather products called LineaItalia in the three islands. His wife, Sylvanna, and children Daniella and Simone, have joined the young Italian expert in Curaçao. A sports enthusiast, **Filippin** is a keen diver, tennis player and windsurfer.

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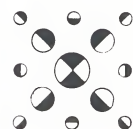
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A sound prescription

Government receives proposal for state pharmaceutical industry



“Since the late 1940’s the number of pharmaceutical preparations available and their overall costs to the community has escalated rapidly.

At the same time most enlightened leaders see it as a national responsibility to provide ever-increasing health care to their communities.

The costs of purchasing pharmaceutical preparations from industrial nations can cause an excessive drain on the economy. Therefore many developing areas of the world are seeking to manufacture, at least in part, their pharmaceutical requirements and control the import and distribution of pharmaceuticals paid for by the state. Properly controlled, such operation can decrease the pressure on foreign exchange and provide a degree of local employment.”

Thus reads the introduction of a detailed proposal by Medicopharma, pharmaceutical wholesaler and largest producer of generics i.e. medicines not protected by trademark registration in the Netherlands, to the Island Government of Curaçao. Officially presented to National and Insular authorities on the 3rd of September last, it recommends the establishment of both a central import and distribution organisation and a plant to manufacture basic pharmaceutical requirements.

The accompanying feasibility study indicates that both operations can be solvable from the very beginning, create employment for at least 48 Antilleans and save the country 4 million guilders in foreign exchange yearly.

Market

At present all pharmaceutical products have to be imported. Import statistics indicate that the total pharmaceutical market is in the vicinity of Naf. 20,000,000.— at CIF prices. The available figures of 1977 show imports under BTN 30,03 of Naf. 19,148,800.—. Most products are bought in the USA and Europe. Mostly, according to Medicopharma, “because imports are in the hands of private importers. They prefer to promote the more expensive (and therefore more profitable) trademarked products, rather than cheaper generic products. At the present time it is estimated that generics account for less than 5% of the total medi-

cation used”. This percentage, the report indicates, could be increased to 40-42%, saving the country Naf 4 million (20%) on the present foreign exchange bill for pharmaceuticals.

The report further notes that as national tenders are seldom issued and patients are free to go to the pharmacist of their own choice, there is no standardization of products, while in addition the cost to the patient (and therefore to the National Health Insurance), may be considerably inflated.

Rationalization of imports and substitution of trademarked products by generics would, according to Medicopharma, lower the bill considerably for both government and patient.

Centralization.

In order to pocket these advantages the report suggests that all imports be controlled by the government and that distribution to pharmacies, drug stores and hospitals be carried out by a central warehousing organization. This could be effected by either a totally Government-owned National Pharmaceutical Company or by a joint venture between the Government and ▶

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Medicopharma, or by a joint stock company with the Government maintaining a controlling interest, the balance of the shares being held by local interests and Medicopharma.

The attached feasibility report shows that the implementation of the proposal would yield a distributable profit of Naf. 423,000.— during the first year.

Total operating costs (excluding stocks) would amount to Naf. 2,097,000.— while the projected operating margin shows a figure of Naf. 3,520,000.—, leaving a comfortable operating surplus of Naf. 1,423,000.—.

The total cost of establishing the unit, which requires a central warehouse and office site, is estimated at Naf. 5 million. This includes pre-operational stock expenses and a working capital of Naf. 500,000.—. Assuming a share capital of 1 million and a bank loan of 4 million over 10 years at 15% annual interest and loan repayment (= Naf. 1 million in the first year), the report arrives at the afore mentioned figure of Naf. 423,000.—, which amounts to a 42% return on invested capital. Calculations proceeding from a zero growth of the market show that this figure may run up to close to a million in 10 years.

Benefits

The proposed centralized set-up would enable the Government to ensure substitution of a wide range of trademarked products by generics. As mentioned above, Medicopharma is convinced that this could produce an annual saving in foreign exchange of at least Naf. 4 million. The National Health Insurance would also benefit greatly as the total price of pharmaceuticals for patients would be reduced by at least 25%.

Another welcome effect would be the prompt availability to the patient of a complete range of pharmaceuticals. The report suggests that the unit maintain its stock control using the central computer of Medicopharma to assure smooth supplying of all items and at the same time minimize stock holdings and financial investment.

Furthermore the project will provide employment for approximately 16 Antilleans.

The report, however, does not indicate the loss of employment which may result in the private import sector. It stands to reason that the Government will have to weigh the obvious benefits against the losses which will be incurred by import firms both in terms of finance and employment.

Production

In addition to rationalizing all drug imports Medicopharma advises the Government to include the local production of generics in the project.

This would add considerably to the saving of foreign exchange and provide more employment. Although a separate unit (from the import and distribution organization) at a later stage could by itself be quite viable, the feasibility study shows that greater profits and benefits will be secured when both operations are combined and started together.

Due to the generally highly technical and skilled nature of pharmaceutical manufacture, the report suggests that the introduction of local production should be carried out in stages. The establishment of a plant manufacturing syrups, other liquid preparations, tablets and capsules (using pregranulated raw materials) could, however, be accomplished fairly rapidly. Production requiring higher technical skills and infra-structure could possibly be started at a later stage. Giving a detailed breakdown of

investment costs, income and expenditure, the feasibility report concludes that a joint wholesale/manufacturing project would yield a handsome profit, save Naf. 5,600,000.— in foreign exchange, produce employment for 48 Antilleans, while loan capital could be paid back in 10 years and investment capital in less than five years. Patients would pay at least 25% less for their medications.

Medicopharma

Medicopharma seems extremely well suited to assist the Antillean Government in reorganizing the country's supply of pharmaceuticals. The company has experience with unit development in both Europe and the 3rd World, and offers a product range wider than that of most companies. Almost all basic requirements of developing countries can be met.

Founded in 1946 by a group of dispensing medical doctors in the Netherlands, the company has grown rapidly and consistently. In 1980 a turnover of approx. 150 million Dutch Guilders (US\$ 55 million) was achieved.

In 1977 Medicopharma expanded its manufacturing facilities by purchasing 100% control of Phorbata B.V. and also in 1977 100% control of Carl Blank GmbH was obtained. The Company J. H. Rooster & Zn BV was purchased in 1978. This company formed a joint-venture with E-Z-EM Corporation (USA) to manufacture and market Barium products and other X-ray software. Early in 1981 an agreement was signed with Consortex Medical GmbH to co-operate on turnkey projects, joint-ventures and management contracts.

In case the Antillean Government would decide to embark on the proposed venture, Medicopharma suggests that the company hold a minority of shares as a guarantee of good faith, as it will be instrumental in the success of the project. As the proposal is very much in line with the view held by Mr. J. Eisdén, Minister of Social Affairs (as set forth in AR vol 1 nr. 4), it may be expected to receive very serious attention indeed. ■

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Discussing the profession

Work conditions and ethical challenges dominate press congress

Gathering for their 10th annual congress members of the Antillean Press Association closed the doors and sat down to discuss their own trade. A marked departure from the customary trumpet blowing of the past years. No grand receptions and impressive speeches, but instead three days of serious reflection on problems and challenges facing the profession. The sober set-up may have given the press-corps' reputation a much needed lift. The sobering discussions may, hopefully, lead to measures giving responsible journalism a chance.

Underpaid

Probably the most underpaid profession in the Netherlands Antilles journalism has little chance of coming of age. The average salary of those working for the daily papers amounts to no more than Naf. 1200.— (US\$ 670,—) a month. Additional provisions on the whole are hardly worth mentioning and are not even standardized. Superannuation schemes are non-existent. As a result most journalists have to take side jobs to make both ends meet. A situation which does not exactly make for quality. Research, reflection and study are luxuries few Antillean journalists can permit themselves. Not being able to satisfy the public's expectations has led to a general feeling of frustration. Reason why the organizers of the 10th Press Congress brought together publishers, journalists, the Minister of Social Affairs, mr. J. Eisdén, and his advisor mr. Ralph Sammy. The first open discussion ever between the parties concerned did not arrive at any clear-cut solutions. Nor was it expected to. The fact, however, that the problem was discussed in an atmosphere of mutual understanding must be rated an important step forward, according to mr. Frans Heiligers, president of the Curaçao Press Club (SOPEC).

Scramble

Publishers present at the meeting pointed out that the underlying

problem is one of economics. Margins are extremely small for the press industry.

Several papers incurred great losses in the past years due to a heavy increase of costs caused by the rising prices of oil. In particular the cost of newsprint, which has to be imported, went up sky high during the past years. Transportation costs to the other islands — most papers are printed in Curaçao — also bear heavily on the publishers' budgets. Price control measures by the Government have not kept up with the trend. Papers still have to be sold well below the average price readers pay in countries comparable to the Netherlands Antilles. The country's small scale situation is reflected both in the size of circulation and the limited advertising market. Suggestions that papers should merge or one or two should die, do not take into account democracy's need for a diversified press. One of the resolutions of the congress stressed this last point explicitly.

Proposals for improvement based on a three year old (sic.) study of the situation by mr. Th. H. Oltheten, director of the Dutch Government's Publishing House, have as yet not been acted upon by the Government. Proposals and report are still being studied!

Now that the Minister of Social Affairs has become aware of the plight of Antillean journalists some action may, hopefully, be expected.



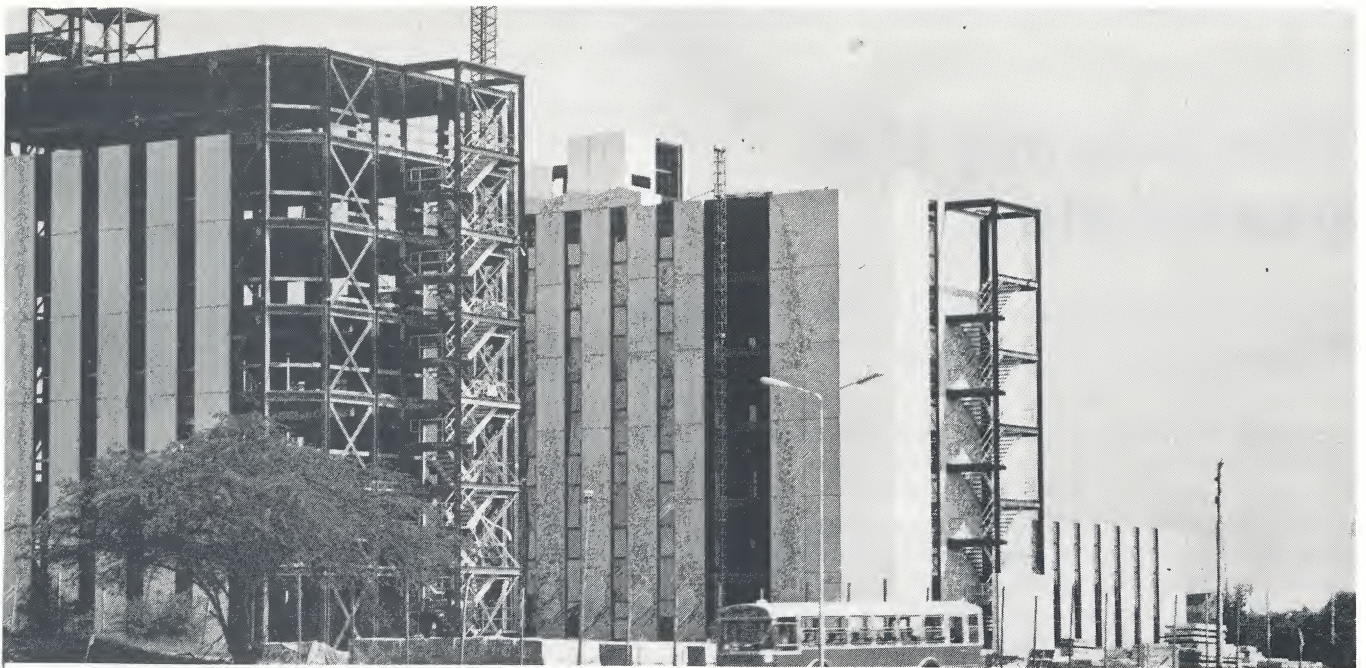
Photo Amigoe

Transportation subsidies, updating the price-control measures and the provision of facilities with regard to the purchase and storage of newsprint are some of the actions which could be undertaken by the Government to ease up the situation in general and create room for better working conditions.

Ethics

The abuse of human suffering for the purpose of boosting sales has long since worried responsible citizens and journalists alike. Photos of accidents showing gory details or exposing private grief are no uncommon feature in the Antillean press. Sensational articles with little respect for privacy are also no exception. This in spite of the fact that the Antillean Press Association approved a code of honour denouncing such practices at its annual meeting two years ago.

During the recent congress journalists and photographers gathered around a round table and looking each other in the face discussed the matter at hand in a most open manner. Barrister Erich Zielinski, a former editor of the *Beurs en Nieuwsberichten*, presided over the meeting most ably, not allowing for nasty personal clashes. The discussion led to a resolution adopted by the congress exhorting members of the corps to show more respect for matters pertaining to life and death and not to take advantage of human suffering to increase circulation. One possible gain may be a more visible distinction between the sensational and responsible press. The ultimate answer will then be with the public. ■



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Revealing report on Caribbean churches

by Gerke Renting

From 19 to 25 November the Third Assembly of the Caribbean Conference of Churches (CCC) will be held in Curaçao. The expectancy with which this event is being looked forward to is becoming palpable. More and more people are beginning to realize that future is going to be written here. And that on this occasion the Churches will have to make clear to each other the visions and priorities they want to work with in this turbulent, ideologically and geographically so divided, Caribbean area. With great interest they are awaiting to see what the contributions of keynote-speakers like Dr. Philip Potter and Dr. Dom Helder Camara are going to be.

CC Review/Evaluation 1981

For this Assembly the CCC has deposited a revealing document concerning itself on the table of the Churches: a report in which all of its own objectives, conflicting visions, programmes, yes, the whole impact of nearly 10 years of Caribbean ecumenical church work is closely examined.

The title is: CCC Review/Evaluation 1981 and it numbers 143 very compactly written pages. It was compiled by six persons who are closely connected with the CCC and may therefore be read as a document that clearly demonstrates the self-understanding and *raison d'être* of this regional organisation concerned with helping member Churches to better serve the people of the region. (p.1). In the approaching Assembly then for once no idealistic position-statement, but a basic document concerning the actual state of affairs.

Action for Development and Renewal

Before taking a look in this report it is useful to put in a row whom the CCC represents. Its cradle stood in Chaguaramas, Trinidad in November 1971. It was placed therein by the Caribbean Ecumenical Consultation for Development held there. Its Inaugural Assembly was held two years later in Jamaica.

Starting out with 19 member Churches, the CCC after that soon grew into an organisation with points of support in 27 territories, 27 member Churches, an expenditure of US\$ 2.4 million and a total staff of 99.

The CCC has never denied its origin as an organisation to coordinate church activities in the field of social development, and to plan and reflect on them. Its most important Agency is CADEC (Christian Action for Development in the Caribbean), labouring for the development of the Caribbean people in the wider community beyond what is strictly "Church" (p.16). As early as 1969 CADEC already existed as an independent organisation. In order to extend it to serve a wider area it was included at the creation of the CCC.

In 1980 alone CADEC provided US\$ 690,377.00 for 24 projects. A grant of \$ 112.61 to a project for training women for skills on Antigua was among one of them, but also a loan of \$ 84,000.00 to provide the material and equipment necessary to establish a 10,000-bird layer unit in Jamaica. The Anglican Church in Curaçao received \$ 47,725.00 to assist in the construction of a community centre.

In 1974 the second Agency of the CCC was formed: ARC (Action for the Renewal of the Church). with as objective to assist member Churches in

their joint action and reflection on what it means to believe in Jesus Christ today in the Caribbean. ARC took over some of the tasks from CADEC (women work, youth work, christian education) and set up a whole range of programmes itself, of which the Caribbean Ecumenical Programme (CEP) is the most comprehensive, and which comprises in general highly valued educational work, directed towards the social education training of clergy, laity and youth.

There is a unique initiative fresh from the printing presses now in the book-stores: the first Caribbean Ecumenical Christian Education Curriculum under the title "Fashion Me A People", prepared for all ages from kindergarten to adults. It was produced by the Education Renewal Programme Action (ERA) programme of the ARC.

ARC has always had more difficulty to obtain sufficient funds than the CADEC.

A call to move

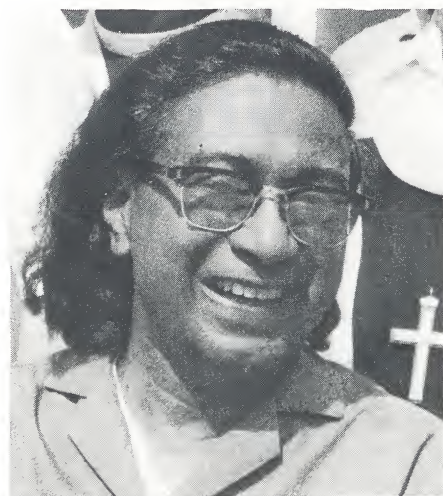
All this gives us a fair picture of what the CCC is. An actually still very young ecclesiastical organisation of high importance. Nearly all the churches in the area, except a few fundamentalistic groups, are members. And this is quite unique in the ecclesiastical world. The CCC has an interest in almost everything from church to community and takes a clear position with its call to move immediately along a new path of liberated development. (p.7).

Too remote

However, it is annoying for the CCC that it is often not judged for its programmes, but that the balance tilts to its disadvantage, because of its widely ▶



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known and prevailing lack of planning, evaluation and communication, added to the editorial policy of its monthly newspaper "Caribbean Contact".

Too remote or too leftist is the judgment given on it by Caribbean church leaders and recorded by the reporters. Such a statement, however, leaves the door still wide open for further conversation and certainly for a discussion as will take place at the Assembly.

With "too remote" is not only meant that the CCC headquarters is too far away for many, or that its publicity concerning the programmes often leaves very much to be desired. In it the complaint can also be discerned that a distance has grown between the CCC and the Churches forming its constituency. It seems as if the reporters still do not realize the seriousness of this situation. Part of the blame for the feeling of alienation between the CCC and its member Churches is attributed to the lack of funds for support where needed (p. 83). And the Church leaders themselves get a lick with the rough side of the tongue, because they are not aware at all of what it means to fund development concerns. (p. 70). With this the problem has not been solved, however, but only put into words.

Or too leftist

Between the lines the report is one great testimony of the self-understanding of the CCC-staff. They see themselves as people called to work in the interest of social and economic justice for the poor and oppressed (p. 10). But not all Churches appear to see ecumenical involvement in the struggle for social justice as a priority (p. 17), the report admits. This makes one wonder if the recommended remedy to explicitly challenge member Churches to be open to change is not exactly the same one that has taken the CCC so far from home.

There is a difference namely between the way in which one has to address college students (too academic) and the way in which one has to deal with village ministers, priests and the faithful. Illustrative of the seriousness of the situation is that the splendid initiative of the Cristian Education Curriculum runs the risk of being a failure, because the churches complain that it does not supply enough doctrinal content.

An effort will have to be made to diminish the distance between the CCC and the Churches, not as a tactical manoeuvre, but in the interest of both. The report shows its honesty, when it states that there are persons who are of

opinion that the CCC has to choose for the socialist approaches, as they seem to present a means of achieving more rapidly the social justice aimed at. (p. 18)

Greater theological clarity

The reporters do not go along with these persons, but instead insist upon greater theological clarity concerning the visions and ideologies prevailing in the Caribbean Area with regard to the question of education and human development.

And yet to me the question remains whether they do not already prescribe for theology what the result must be of its considerations, when a little further on we hear that theology and theologizing . . . constitute engagements in concrete action accompanied by continued reflection that is more than mere theoretical reflection" (p. 20). The model for the task given to theology here might well have been

international issues in wholly political terms without always bringing to bear on them specifically Christian insights. (p. 64).

The report recommends carrying out a survey with particular attention to the readership of Contact and the perception of those readers about the newspaper (p. 65). This will probably mean that the CCC will then also take into serious account, the results of such a survey.

No on-going monitoring

The longest chapter in the report is a survey of the impact of the existing programmes of ARC and CADEC. Not that the programmes are considered bad, or that even one of the 11 programmes of ARC or of the 16 of CADEC is disapproved, but both Agencies appear to have hardly ever been interested in the results of their unflagging work. At the ARC only CEP was doing an evaluation-survey. And at the CA-



Dr. P. Potter (r.) at Geneva Headquarters

derived from a way of thinking, the origin of which lies outside the church.

Caribbean Contact

The Caribbean Contact for that matter did not fare so favourably in the report. It is once again clearly stated that this is a regional newspaper intended to serve partly as an organ of the CCC and partly as a means to disseminate information and to stimulate thinking on development in the Caribbean region (p. 63). The remark is made that not much has changed since 1978: It remains true that reservations about Contact continue to exist in the minds of a number of people (p. 64). Whereas at that time the concern had after all already been voiced that Contact shows a tendency to deal with national, regional and

DEC only the Appropriate Technology programme was busy with a feasibility-study, while the Conscientization programme had once (in 1978) circulated a questionnaire.

None of the other programmes disposed of hard data or adequate information, from which the impact of their programmes might appear.

The reporters did discover that sometimes they worked with scarcely achievable objectives, a diffuse approach on an ad hoc basis, without adequate planning and management, relatively isolated from most (other) programmes etc.

And about the only programme the impact of which could be calculated up to the cent accurately (the fundraising drive Christian Action week) it must be admitted that the returns were meagre. ▶

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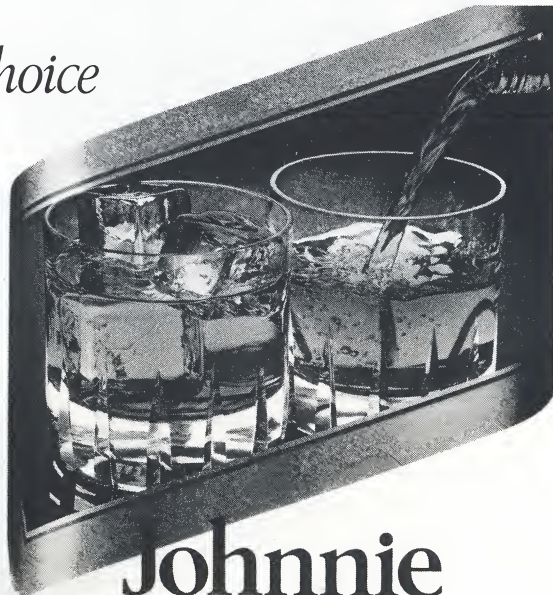
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But they did not say that the programmes were below standard, and it is a very well known fact about at least a number of programmes that they draw a lot of interest and are also highly valued.

The report points out this lack of a proper evaluation, because this causes problems with the donors and will result in difficulty to stipulate policy changes.

Critical issue

It would no doubt be possible to get a lot more out of the report and to give more comments. There is for example a remarkable chapter in it on Critical Issues of the Eighties, in which the geopolitical context, human resources, economic vulnerability and ideological autonomy of the region are successively reviewed. The conclusion thereof is that the pursuit of collective self-reliance for Caribbean peoples in all the fields mentioned has to become the fundamental policy of the CCC.

Reorganisation

In another chapter a proposal is made for a new organisation structure for the CCC. The creative tension that may exist between ARC and CADEC, in reality often is not so much a matter of the CCC doing nothing or doing little, as of the CCC's efforts being unco-ordinated or, in some cases, being at cross-purposes with each other. (p. 96).

Both Agencies would have to be joined together in one streamlined organisation structure, with as top Executive Body a

Planning, Evaluation and Communications Unit (PEC). By doing this a couple of chronic ailments of the CCC would indeed be cured and room would be left to pay more attention to policy matters.

However, the report contains no survey of the consequences of the proposed reorganisation seen in the light of expenses and staffing.

Embarrassment

The considerations in the report concerning Caribbean Contact among other things clearly show the embarrassment the CCC, the Churches and nearly every believer in the Caribbean is experiencing.

Our region is filled with ideological pluralism (p. 114) and neither the theology nor the churches seem to be able to speak any new word that in the eyes of the masses can compete with the pulling power of the already existing political systems.

For it is exactly in our region that if one should sail from one island to another one would encounter everything that the world in this day has to offer in the way of ideologies and social organizations.

It does the CCC great honour that it sees this challenge for the Churches and accepts it. And it must not be too quickly condemned if it directs its attention towards the liberation theology (p. 114).

But this is not the only ideology existing and a Caribbean theology would do well to always keep its eyes and ears

wide open. Developing a new contextualized theology does not need haste or indolence. It has to be created by the mutual interaction of the Bible, our faith and our world. Its source probably lies less in engagement with one's social and cultural context (p. 20) than with the willingness to listen to all the three poles mentioned. The remark that a more explicit engagement in dialogue among themselves and with the Caribbean society will be requested from the churches (p. 121) does give us hope.

Not fighting windmills

The CCC does not make it easier for itself with this report. The Assembly will have to untie difficult knots. It is to be hoped that the delegates will discuss this report beforehand with their constituents.

The CCC is an organization that has grown rapidly, and which did not shrink from encumbering itself with almost every thinkable problem concerning the Churches. But on its course it has been confronted with two problems: the relation to its constituency and the requirements of an efficient organization.

Not everything can be improved at the same time, and therefore priorities will have to be set.

However, the Churches will have to realize that none of them can avoid the choices put before them by the CCC. For, whatever might be said about the CCC, it definitely is not fighting windmills. ■



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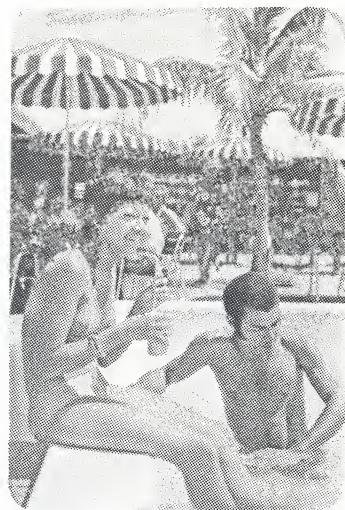
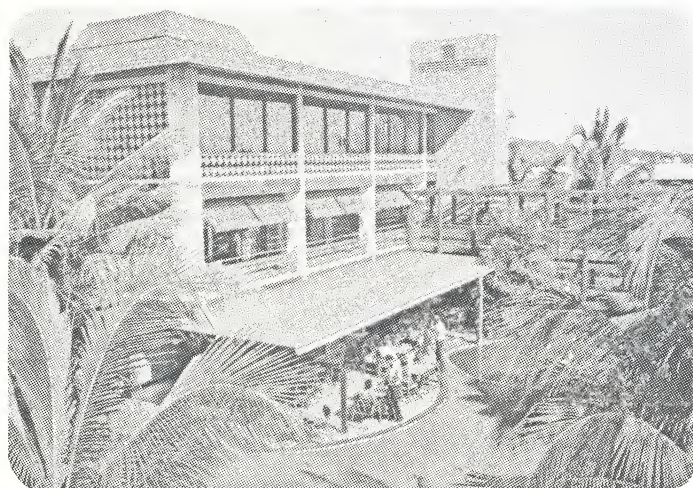
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Why worry?

My friends and some readers know by now that San Marco was a good place to sit and to have a cup of coffee while observing life in Willemstad and listening to the gossip and the comments on whatever happened to be in the news. Sometimes people would express their private worries.

Like the fellow who had read that a geological survey showed that Curaçao was nothing but a huge mushroom rising from the bottom of the ocean, with its fragile stem hidden by the deep seas. "You see", he explained "there was this eruption of a volcano a long time ago and the molten lava hardened and flattened at the top, later on its was covered by bird-droppings. The stem of this mushroom is eroding and one day Curaçao will disappear . . ."

With his hand he made a diving motion while he uttered a sinister "gluck, gluck, gluck".

It was indeed a sad picture. But then suddenly he looked at me inquiringly.

"Do you think that it will disappear before the next world war?"

It seemed to cheer him up that we all would be gone before the big MESS, and I could imagine that in the next days he was going to enjoy life a bit more while it lasted!

Why worry to keep the island floating. You would end up with a head-ache to keep the tires inflated, or to keep the wood from rotting or to keep those foam-rubbers in their place, only to face another disaster!

Why worry!

I remember vividly that sunday-evening when the Minister of Finance appeared on television to sound the alarm on the financial situation of the Netherlands Antilles. The balance of payments of our country was negative and our Government would not be able to meet its commitments. The next day the newspapers had more doomsday announcements to make. The insular government could not pay its hospital bill, nor

its financial obligations to the Central Government.

It formed a solid subject for very excited discussions in San Marco.

We were there, twelve steady customers and of course Mr. T. who never really participated in the conversation. He would sit there the whole morning fulfilling his routine of selling illegal lottery-numbers while drinking only one cup of coffee at 75 cents. On the other hand he would give a \$2,- tip to show his good standing in the numbers-racket.

This time he obviously felt aggravated by the loud comments on the disastrous financial situation of our country. It was indeed not proper to worry about money in the presence of somebody who was making such an easy buck.

He was also mad at all these big fellows sitting there creating an unpleasant atmosphere and who seemed to enjoy nastiness.

Our friend walked angrily to the door and looked into the street.

He was not sure whether to leave his business or to cut the nonsense being discussed. And if he interrupted the conversation how to do it. You should understand that people discussing local problems

while drinking coffee have the aura of philosophers in deep thought. But then somebody said: "This time it is for keeps, you better pack and leave". That did it!

T. literally burst out: "What the hell are you talking about! Do you know what you are talking about? Do you really think that we have problems? Do you know where to find problems? Do you want me to tell you about problems?" He stood there suddenly, about twelve feet tall gesturing wildly. His mouth and his eyes firing anger at us.

We felt timid and subdued and somewhat flabbergasted of course. The fellow had never said a word before.

"Don't you read the newspaper? Well let me tell you what problems are. I will tell you where to find problems! You want to know who has problems?" He put his knuckles on the table and stared threateningly at me. I am big and loud when argueing. So now he was going to give it straight to me: "In Iran!"

It took some time to register and everybody was quiet.

"In Iran! Don't you read the newspapers? Don't you have a television? Iran has a balance of payments debt of eight billion dollars! Now you know who has a problem! And do you think that that crazy Chomeiny can do anything about it?"

Man, do THEY have a problem! Eight billion dollars and this crazy Chomeiny".

Suddenly everybody was alive and excited.

"Do THEY have a problem!"

We felt relieved and everybody knew something to contribute to THEIR problem.

We were exhilarated and went on with THEIR problem. And Russia also had a problem. The U.S.A. had a problem. And Venezuela had a problem.

Man, are we lucky to live in Curaçao!

And while I walked back to the office I admired that special art of projecting your problems away!

Take for instance my neighbour . . .

■
E. Z.

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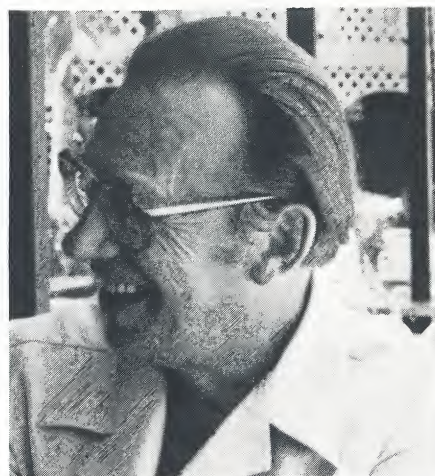


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by Han Folkertsma

At the same pace that wine consumption is increasing, so legislation is keeping pace with the product. Not only as a protective gesture toward the buyer, but also as a watchdog lying on guard at the doorstep of this so important export article.

Great wine scandals of the past years (including a very bad case of fraud recently with German so-called Aus- and Spätleses, which could not possibly have been Spätleses, because it had been a year with very little rain and sugar would have had to be added to attain the sweetish after taste of such a Spätlese) have brought great discredit to the names of the countries where wines were messed with. And that at the expense of a great deal of respect and money.

All this, however, has not made it easier for the wine-lover to make his choice by means of the label. Just like we did with the French labels in one of our preceding columns, we will now try to throw some light on the other wine countries, which have also decreed strict regulations for their wines.

Sherry

Since 1970 the Spaniards have a reasonable legislation, which is put into effect in the various production regions by "Consejos". Per region we find a "Consejo Regulador de las Denominaciones de Origen" at work, setting the production and quality standards. Still the matter is not yet foolproof (Sherries for example can still be messed with in spite of the seal of the Consejo in Jerez), but really large houses like Gonzalez Byass and Pedro Domecq will no doubt think twice before getting themselves into these kinds of problems. For the rest there are also very nice untaxed "small" sherries on the market. The Rioja wines are produced in about eighty large and smaller enterprises in the region itself and the legislation there is strict enough to guarantee a wine with a reliable label.

This is also true of the Valdepeñas and Penedés, the regions that export a relatively large quantity of wine. Portugal has a modest number of quality regions, among which naturally the Douro for the ports and the (white) Vinhos Verdes, as well as the Dao's.

Thorough

Germany has taken the matter thoroughly in hand — since the new Wine Act of 1971 has been in effect there, a large broom has been swept through tradition — all kinds of old terms such as "Originalabfüllung" and "Naturrein" were thrown overboard and substituted by a formal, be it complicated designation. There is no other wine country that gives as much information on the labels as Germany. That scandals still occur notwithstanding, is not so much a proof of the government's lack of intelligence, but of the corruption of man . . . There are three categories of German wines: "Deutscher Tafelwein", "Qualitätswein bestimmter Anbaugebiet" (Qba) and "Qualitätswein mit Prädikat".

The origin as well is mentioned on the label. The "Tafelweine" come from the Rhine-Moselle, Main, Neckar or Oberheid (and remember: if only the word Tafelweine is mentioned on the label, the wine may also come from other countries!). The "quality wines" must come from the following regions: Ahr, Baden, Franken, Hessische Bergstrasse, Mittelrhein, Mosel-Saar-Ruwer, Nahe, Rheingau, Rheinhessen, Rheinpfalz and Württemberg.

Quality wines also have the word "Bereich" on the label, the municipality or the sole vineyard. Finally the label also mentions the kind of grape, an important indication for the quality because a Riesling does have more character than a Syl- ▶



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vaner. Other white wines in addition mention their colour on the label; the winefarmer or winehouse are mentioned and often also the flavour type and any award received as well as the harvest year. Finally a guarantee number is also added, which means that this "amtliche Prüfungsnummer" is in accordance with the place of tasting, the dealer and the harvest year. In fact you could say that the more is mentioned on a German label, the better the wine must be, which proves to be true in almost one hundred percent of the cases.

Luxemburg also knows a strong wine control. "Marque Nationale", "vin classé" and "cru" (premier or grand premier) indicate the quality and especially the "marque nationale" is important for the exported Luxemburgers.

Advancing

The Italians, which are drawing more and more attention and justly so, know the DOC system, comparable to the French AC. The best wines, which therefore may all bear a DOC and since recently even a DOC "G" here and there, come from the Toscare (Chianti's), Trentino Alto Adige, Veneto, Piemonte and Umbria provinces. As a result of the often outstanding Italian qualities the DOC system is often quite rapidly extended to other provinces. You'll further find on the label: "superiore" (somewhat more alcohol), "classico" (comes from the oldest part of the region) and "riserva" (matured wine).

It has to be admitted that your wine-columnist has dwelt too long on the practical side of the wine cult, but it did seem useful to provide a couple of almost indispensable descriptions, so that the wine-lover may recognize what he is going to enjoy and eventually what he has to avoid.

But as has been said before, the personal taste must be the deciding factor and he who thinks that a labelless country wine on a small French terrace means the ultimate bliss, must not try to change that.

As long as he realizes that such a simple find is only fit to drink in those particular circumstances and in that particular mood. For whatever legislators may say or decree: wine remains a personality that often conforms to another personality: the one who lifts the glass, observes the colour, enjoys the bouquet, allows the first sip to carefully roll around in his mouth and finally conquers the natural aroma of the wine in small sips, and in addition profits from a nice after taste. I guess that when it is so far, he has already since long forgotten all about the label. ■

Han Folkertsma

SPORT

"Gimme that ball and I'll do it again"

Curacao Golf & Squash Club celebrates 50th anniversary

Ten days of festivities climaxing with 'The Big Match' on the 13th of this month marked the proud occasion. Half a century long lovers of that ever challenging, never to be mastered and increasingly popular sport Golf swung their clubs on Curaçao links. And for five years now squashers have joined them hitting the ball up against the wall.

History

To most people in the world the word 'golf' calls forth images of lovely green fairways stretched out between clusters of tall rising trees ending in short-mowed greens. Images which are a far cry from desert-like Curaçao. So how did golf come to the island? As it was brought to any other place in the world: by a handful of Englishmen who simply couldn't do without it. Soon quite a few others couldn't either. A most primitive nine hole course was created near Nieuwpoort. From the air one can still see the outlines of those first links. A few years later the Shell Golf Club was founded and given a suitable area near the refinery. Step by step the golf grew into what may now be called a presentable course.

Five years ago the club's board took the happy decision to build two squash-courts thus allowing for a most welcome increase in membership. In 1980 the club was rebaptized "the Curaçao Golf & Squash Club" indicating its double character and its independence. Today the club counts 270 golfers and 110 squashers as its members.


Festive


The great event of the recent celebrations was the Big Match played by three professionals and one outstanding amateur. Invited



for the occasion were Ramon Muñoz, Champion of Venezuela and Latin America, and Allen Mew, champion of Trinidad Tobago. Participating for the Curaçao Club were Pro Jan Cramer and Robert Zingel. Hundreds of hushed onlookers enjoyed two days of watching excellent golf. The first prize (US\$ 1,500.-) went to Muñoz. An international squash match, a non handicappers competition, a cocktail party, cabaret and dinner were some of the other activities, which together with the Big Match made the 50th anniversary a truly memorable occasion. The mood at the Curaçao Golf & Squash Club resembled somewhat that of its Pro for thirty years, Jan Cramer, when he putted the ball from an extremely difficult situation in one stroke. To his opponents 'What a lucky shot!' he replied: 'What? Lucky?? Gimme that ball and I'll do it again!' And so he did! And so, no doubt, will the Curaçao Golf & Squash Club for another 50 years. ■

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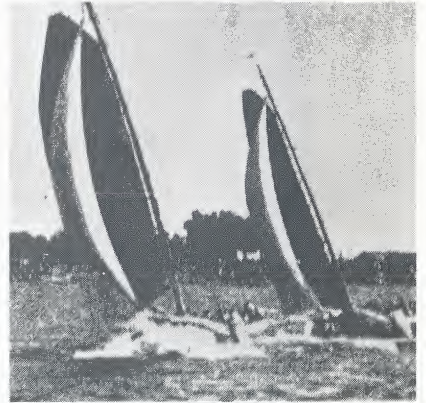
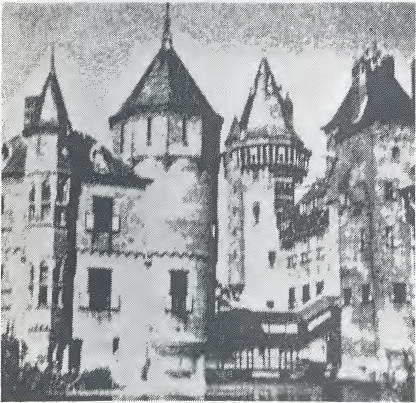
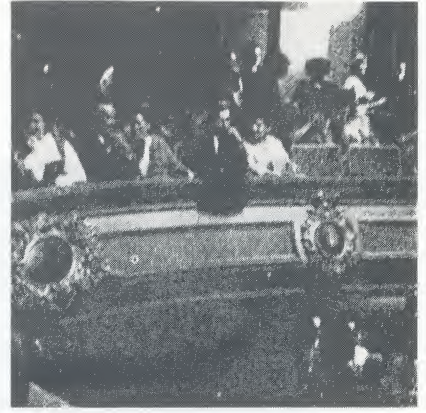
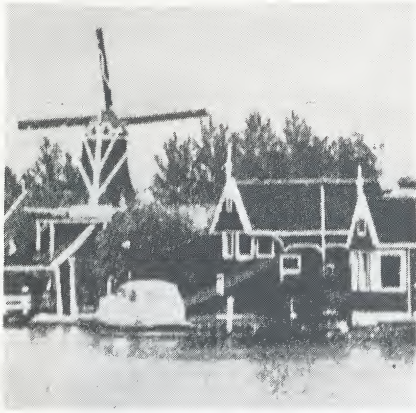
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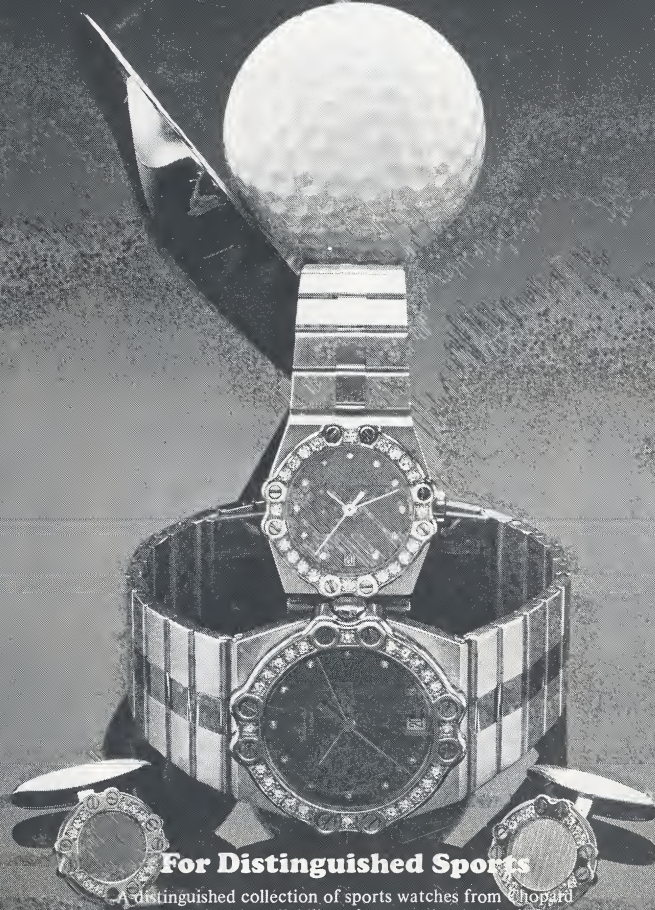
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